

100 NEW GAMES



PLAY



ISSUE
246



MORPHEUS

How VR will change
the way you play
forever

GET SLAUGHTERED!

BLOODBORNE

The Dark Souls team wants you dead in
the hardest game on PlayStation 4

NEW DETAILS ON DRAKE'S FINAL VOYAGE

UNCHARTED 4

A THIEF'S END

GET OVER HERE!

MORTAL KOMBAT X

Unleash your violent streak
in PS4's goriest game

GET CREATIVE!

LBP 3

Sackboy's back, and he's
brought a few friends

GET EVEN!

EVOLVE

Terrifying new
monster revealed

GET ONLINE!

KILLZONE GOES CO-OP

Intercept DLC reviewed

ALSO

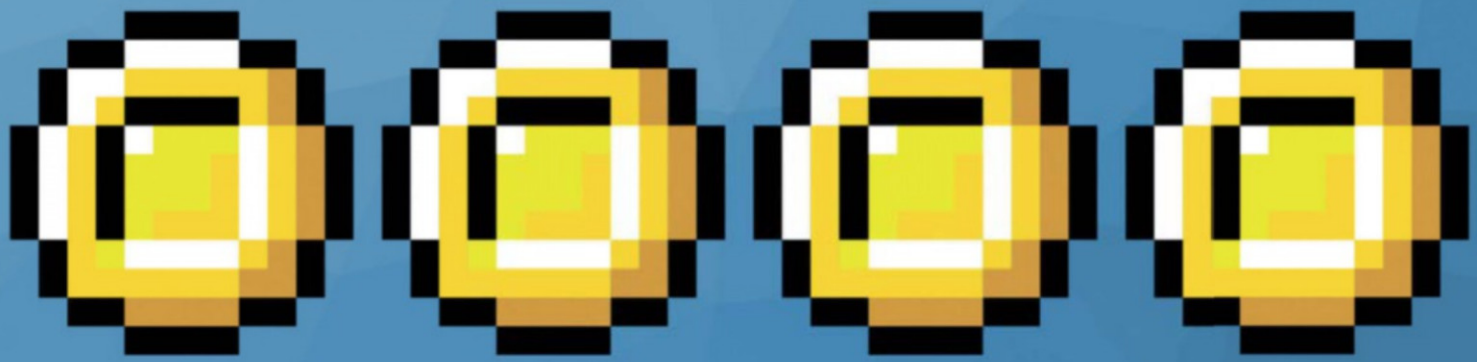
ASSASSIN'S CREED: UNITY
DESTINY MASS EFFECT 4
THE DIVISION FIFA 15
DEAD ISLAND 2 FAR CRY 4
RAINBOW SIX: SIEGE GTA V
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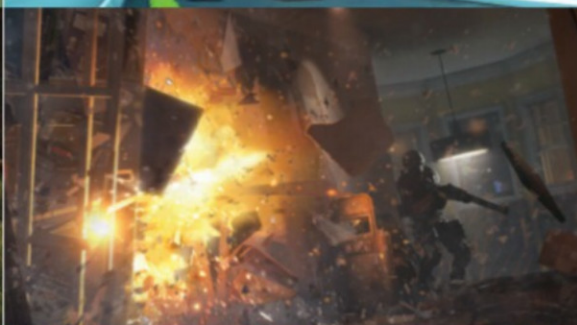
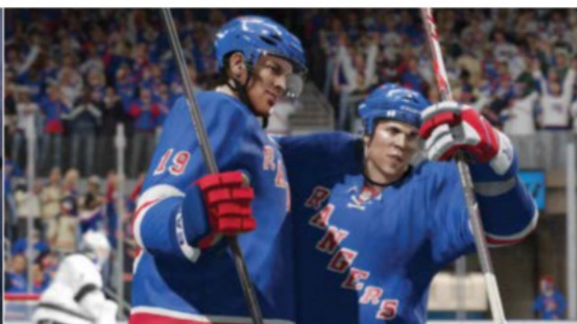
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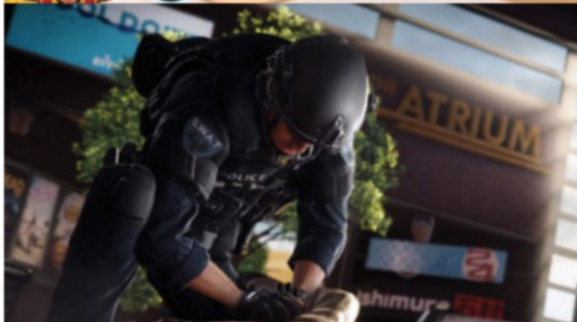
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HANDS-ON WITH PS4 VR HEADSET PROJECT MORPHEUS **60**

GET UP TO SPEED WITH THE UNCHARTED SERIES **86**



TOO MUCH CHOICE



BETWEEN INFAMOUS BEING great but short-lived, *Watch Dogs* failing to live up to expectations for many and a lot of big games being bumped back to 2015, I'm

not surprised that some people have started to wonder whether they made the jump to PS4 a little too soon. It's for that reason that I wanted to devote so much of this issue to brand new games, stuff you might not know about that could make you that little bit happier to have a PS4 hooked up. I'm pretty sure there's something for everyone here – stunning sports games, hardcore RPGs, indie oddities, triple-A shooters... hell, even a music game or two. Oh, and a little something called *Uncharted 4*. It's kind of a big deal.

We expect no less from Naughty Dog, but *Uncharted 4: A Thief's End* is quite simply the best looking game ever made. We're not sure what kind of deal the studio had to strike with the devil to achieve this but what we've seen so far looks pretty much real, all running at 1080p and 60fps too. If you were concerned about the true power of PS4 after a few multi-platform games didn't deliver visually, you need look no further than *Uncharted* to see what the machine can really do. Since Naughty Dog seems to be enjoying teasing us all with just a trickle of new information, I decided to don my deerstalker and do a little detective work – I made some incredible discoveries and stumbled on some very interesting possibilities, all of which you can read exclusively right here.

It's going to be a little quiet on the new release front for the next month or so (the summer gaming drought is back) but there's plenty to play in the meantime – you could head back to *Killzone* or *Resogun* for some co-op, catch up on some PS Plus freebies or join me on *FFXIV* forever. You'll be rewarded for your patience soon because as you may have seen in a magazine, there are quite a lot of awesome new games coming later in the year.

Enjoy the issue, and I'll see ya online.

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CURRENTLY PLAYING
Resogun Heroes (PS4)

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100 NEW GAMES

New announcements as far as the eye can see

PLAY⁺ Contents

If only we could be so grossly incandescent...

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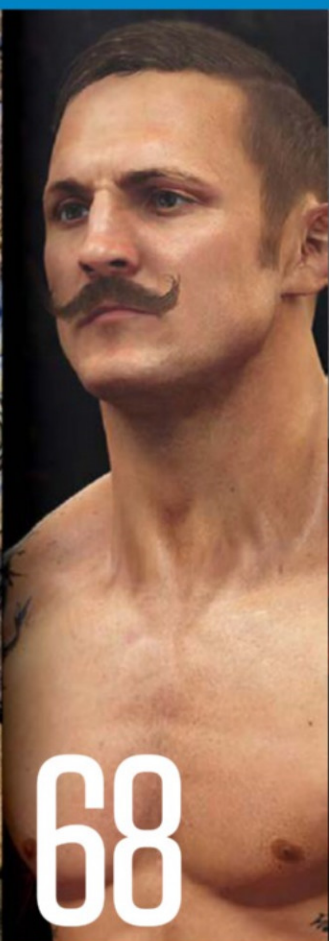
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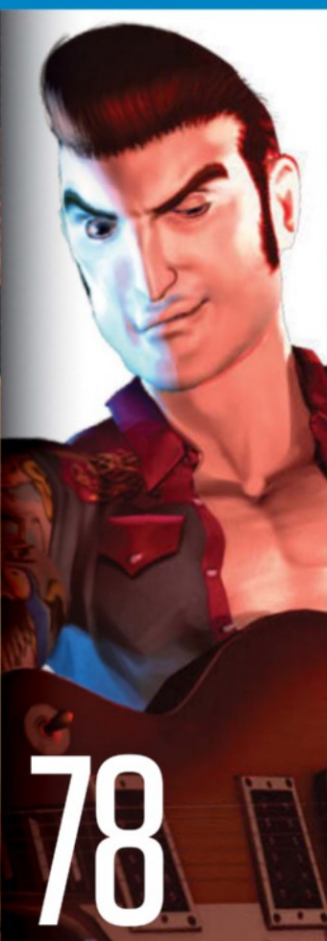
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Boom, headshot

EA SPORTS UFCA knockout or a
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flames, we carry on**UNCHARTED
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100 NEW GAMES

An in-depth look at all the amazing new titles coming to PS4, PS3 and Vita over the next couple of years. You hear that? That's the sound of your wallet weeping...





"A RETIRED DRAKE IS
PULLED BACK INTO THE
TREASURE HUNTING GAME
ONE LAST TIME"



YOUR PICKS

f Uncharted 4 already preordered for my 60th birthday prezzy in april next year.
Phil Hall

t Definitely Uncharted 4. I had no idea there was another one in the pipeline so it was a big shock! Looks great too!
@RaceyDays



UNCHARTED 4: A THIEF'S END

FORMAT: PS4 ETA: 2015

It's not so much what Naughty Dog has shown of *Uncharted 4* that has us ridiculously excited as much as what it means for both the game itself and our new favourite console. The two minutes of footage Sony has been showing off recently is, according to the team, all in-engine – that photorealistic older version of Nathan Drake we've been seeing is an actual in-game character model. The detail in his face is ludicrous, with every wrinkle, pore and bead of sweat rendered perfectly to the point where you could be looking at a real person. It seems likely that the model used for actual gameplay will be slightly less detailed than this cutscene

model – that's what Naughty Dog did in *The Last Of Us*, after all, and such a level of detail would be overkill considering the distance from which the third-person camera usually follows Drake – but either way, what we've seen is all running at native 1080p and 60fps on a PlayStation 4. That's amazing.

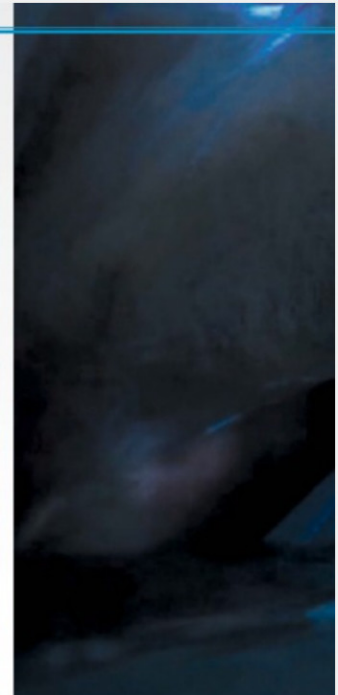
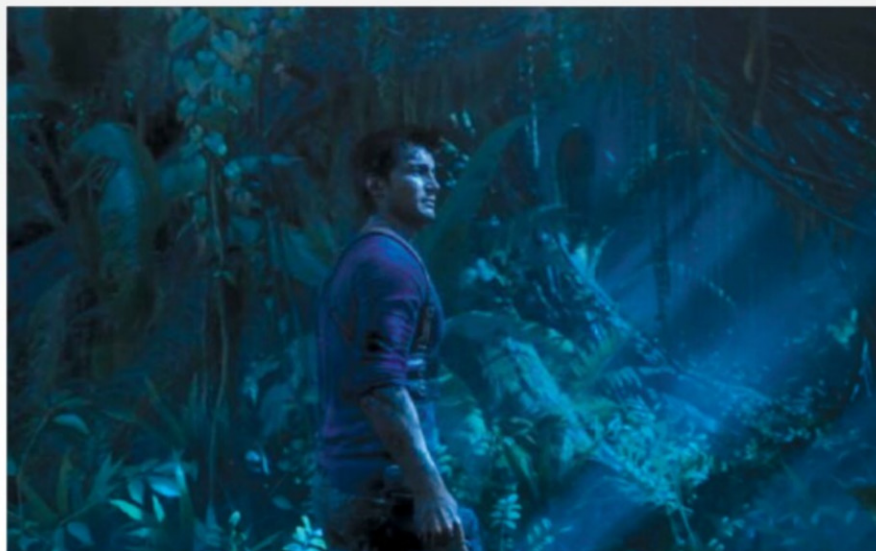
Set some years after *Uncharted 3*, a retired Drake is pulled back into the treasure hunting game one last time for the usual mix of fabled booty, global conspiracies, treacherous platforming, cover-shooting and wisecracks. We just hope this older Drake hasn't lost his personality, as it'd be all too easy for him to slip

into 'I'm getting too old for this shit' *Crystal Skull* rubbish, but we're sure we can trust Naughty Dog to avoid this. It's been suggested that Drake's PS4 debut could be his last outing, both by the game's title and Drake's voice actor Nolan North – it'd be a shame to see such an iconic PlayStation franchise laid to rest, but we'd far rather see it go out with an incredible 1080p bang than limp along with increasingly tired biannual outings. But whether this is the last time we meet Drake or the start of a whole new adventure on PlayStation 4, this is by far our most anticipated game of next year. Bring it the hell on.



FOLLOWING THE CLUES

What the little details tell us about the big picture. Is this how *Uncharted 4*'s story will play out?



ÎLE SAINTE-MARIE

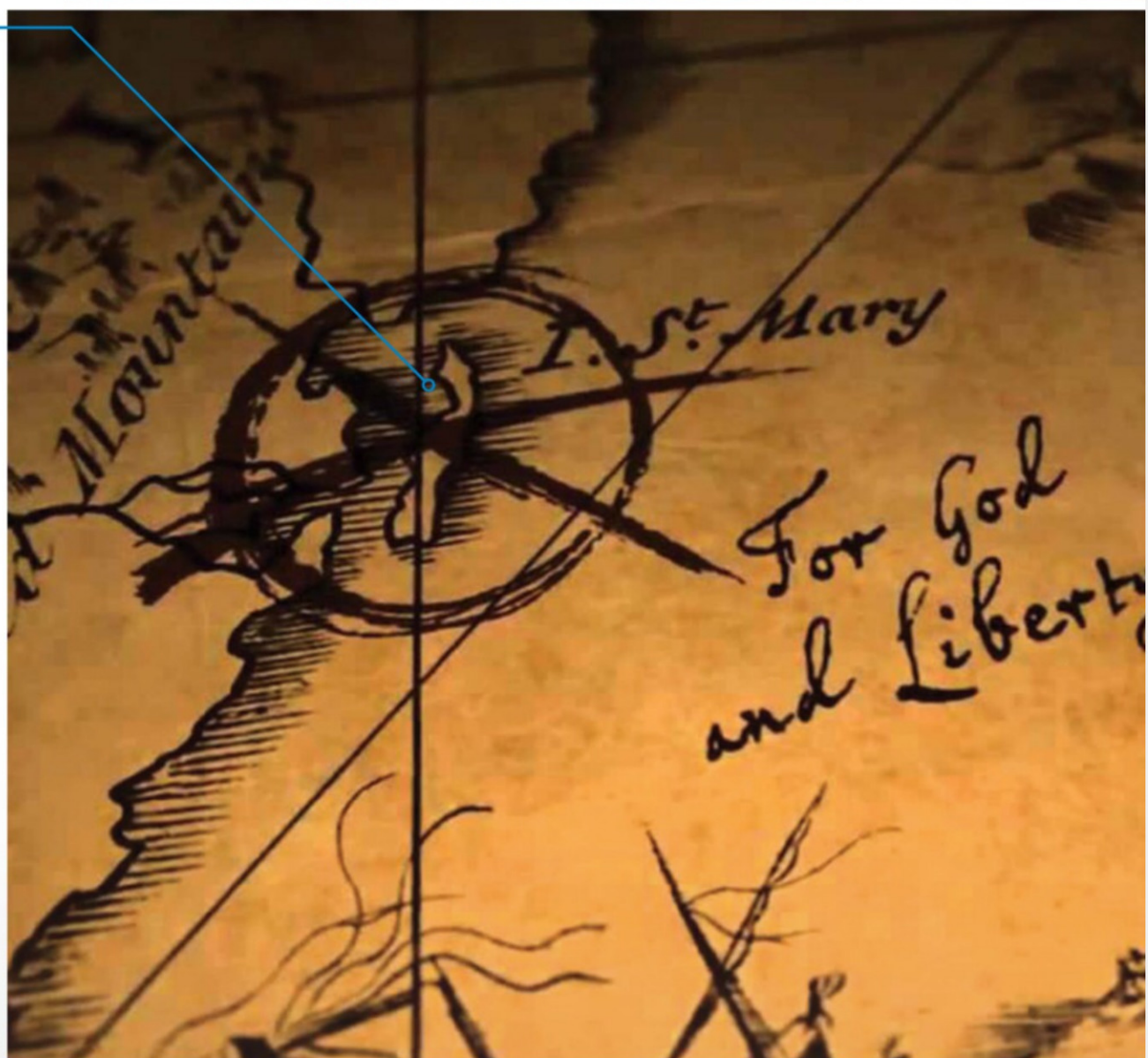
The original reveal trailer panned across an old map before arriving at a circled island, namely Île Sainte-Marie on the west coast of Madagascar. Many originally assumed that this would be the game's setting, but that wouldn't really be in keeping with *Uncharted*'s usual globe-hopping structure. No, what it actually tells us is more likely the setup for the game, especially considering the text next to the island on the map...

LIBERTATIA

Scrawled to the right of the circled island is the phrase 'For God and Liberty', the motto of the pirate colony of Libertatia in the late 17th Century. This would have been similar to *Black Flag*'s depiction of Nassau – a safe haven for pirates – but nobody is sure whether it actually existed or not. This makes it just a more modern version of the other myths Drake has successfully discovered over the years, but it gets even more interesting.

OLIVIER LEVASSEUR

Île Sainte-Marie was also the base of operations for a French pirate known as Olivier Levasseur, who was responsible for one of the single most lucrative feats of piracy ever committed – the haul would be worth hundreds of millions of dollars today. Levasseur was hanged in 1730, but his legacy would live on – from the gallows, he reportedly tossed several parchments covered in cryptograms and codes into the assembled crowd, offering his hidden treasure to anyone who could decipher his riddle. This was actually used as the setup for mobile spin-off *Assassin's Creed: Pirates*.



THE LOST TREASURE

Levasseur's riddle still hasn't been solved to this day, but not for want of trying – several optimistic treasure hunters are still trying to put the pieces of the puzzle together today, despite storms destroying a sand wall and leaving the current search area in the Seychelles submerged. The cryptic clues are apparently inspired by the 12 labours of Hercules, making this treasure the perfect prize for an adventurer like Drake.





THE THREAT

The map trailer also features a voiceover by an unnamed character, containing threats that we can safely assume are aimed at Drake. "You left me, rotting in that hell-hole and never looked back," the mysterious voice says. "But you can't outrun the past. And when it catches up, when all your lies collapse around you, I'll be there, sifting through the wreckage. You owe me."



DRAKE'S RING

In the most recent footage, Drake is clearly still wearing his wedding ring – given how much older he is than when we last saw him at the end of *Uncharted 3*, we can probably assume that he has successfully patched things up with Elena. Why is this significant? Well, from the new trailer's voiceover, Drake seems to imply that this adventure is something he *has* to do rather than something he wants to do – a big score wouldn't be enough to bring him out of retirement, but saving someone he loves almost certainly would.



PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

There's going to be a lot of assuming going on here, but the evidence is stacking up so we're cool with taking an educated guess or two. So this is how we reckon things are going down – someone Drake has wronged in the past has kidnapped Elena and is using her as leverage to send Drake after Levasseur's lost treasure, meaning he'll have to follow the ancient clues from place to place, solve the 300-year-old riddle and find the pirate booty to secure her safe return. Letters relating to the discovery of Levasseur's documents suggest that the

cryptograms were passed down among Freemasons, which may well be where the conspiracy angle mentioned in the official press release comes in – it could be that the treasure contains something far more valuable than we know, or has some other significance or danger attached to it. Nolan North seems to think that this will be Drake's final outing, and the title would seem to corroborate that... but will Naughty Dog have the balls to kill off its biggest earner? We look forward to finding out...

TECH DETAILS

Breaking down the technical side of things

NATIVE 1080P

Multiple sources have confirmed that the footage of *Uncharted 4* that we've been shown so far runs at native 1080p, as opposed to being upscaled from a lower resolution or using super-sampling – rendering at a higher resolution and downscaling to improve visual fidelity. A good start.

60 FPS

The footage shown so far is all a solid 60 frames per second, without so much as a hiccup. Naughty Dog is targeting this frame rate for the entire game, but whether or not it'll be able to maintain it with more action on-screen remains to be seen – everything we've seen so far has been fairly slow-paced.

ANTI-ALIASING

Hair is one of the hardest things to get right (hence all the hatted heroes we've seen on PlayStation 4 so far) but there's some great anti-aliasing going on in the footage we've seen and Drake's hair is basically perfect. It's likely this hardware-intensive technique will be used more heavily in cutscenes than in-game to ensure smooth performance, but it's still pretty impressive all the same.

DEPTH OF FIELD

Part of the realistic look is achieved with common techniques like motion blur and depth of field, adding blur to things that aren't the focal point of the shot just as a real eye or camera would do. It's a subtle but incredibly convincing effect that we're sure to see a lot more of.

POLYGON COUNTS

Naughty Dog has confirmed that Drake's model is made up of over twice the number of polygons as Joel's character model in *The Last Of Us*. An actual figure has not yet been offered, but we're not surprised to hear this after seeing the insane level of detail in Drake's face alone.

LITTLEBIGPLANET 3

FORMAT: PS4 **ETA:** NOVEMBER 2014

Sony's creative platformer is back and better than ever, looking beautiful on PS4 and coming from Sumo Digital as Media Molecule continues work on an exciting new project of its own. The promise of even more in-depth creation tools sounds great, but the best part is that Sackboy has apparently made some new friends. Meet the four stars of the show...



SWOOP

A character who can fly seems somewhat broken in a platform game, but Swoop will rely on support from the others in removing obstacles. Still, the ability to pick up light objects and other characters will likely keep Swoop busy and give him something to do rather than just flying over entire levels. You'll be able to prevent that on your own created levels by selecting which characters can be used, mind.



ODDSOCK

There's a very real chance that Oddsock could be the best character in anything, ever. This strange sock-dog-thing is the fastest of the bunch and can use this pace to power wheel-based devices or just speed-run levels faster than anyone else. The wall-jump ability is a game-changer too, since it allows Oddsock to reach higher areas than anyone aside from Swoop can get to. Also, look at it. Incredible.

SACKBOY

This guy should need no introduction – he's the fabric face of the series, after all. But with gameplay now focused on offering four distinct play styles, his moveset and arsenal have changed somewhat to give him a role on the team. Our woolen buddy is the only one who can climb meshed objects, plus his Pumpinator allows him to blow platforms and other items around, both for helping his friends and for general mischief.

TOGGLE

Essentially two characters in one, Toggle is both the biggest and the smallest playable character in *LittleBigPlanet 3* and can rapidly switch between his different forms at the touch of a button. While large, his heft can be used to prime springs and weigh down objects, while his smaller form allows him to scurry through tight gaps that none of the rest of the cast can fit into. It's unclear why his small form is so full of rage though...



FAMILY FUN

Not all new games need guns, you know...

SINGSTAR

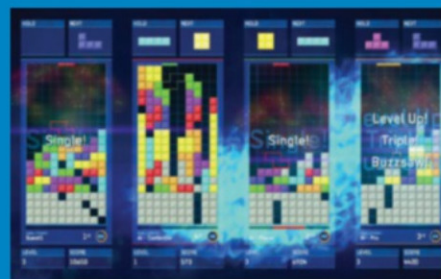
FORMAT: PS4, PS3 **ETA:** Q3 2014

A new version of Sony's karaoke game is coming to PS4, and you won't even need a microphone to play – a free app for smartphones will allow you to sing right into your phone.

LEGO BATMAN 3: BEYOND GOTHAM

FORMAT: PS4, PS3 **ETA:** Q3 2014

It's been about ten minutes since the last Lego game, so it's time for another. This time, Batman and all his plastic DC friends go to space to face off against Brainiac.



TETRIS ULTIMATE

FORMAT: PS4, VITA **ETA:** Q3 2014

It's hardly pushing the PS4 but this new version of the classic puzzle game is welcome all the same, even if the talk of adding power-ups caused us to be a little bit sick in our mouths.



RABBIDS INVASION

FORMAT: PS4 **ETA:** NOVEMBER 2014

An interactive TV show rather than a videogame in the strictest sense. Still, *Invasion* will make use of the PS Eye to amuse the younglings with frequent mini-games over the course of each crazy episode. BWAAAAH.

JUST DANCE 2015

FORMAT: PS4, PS3
ETA: OCTOBER 2014

There's more of a community aspect with this year's *Just Dance*, with Community Remix showing other players dancing on-screen. Couldn't this just be DLC?



HOMEFRONT: THE REVOLUTION

FORMAT: PS4 ETA: 2015

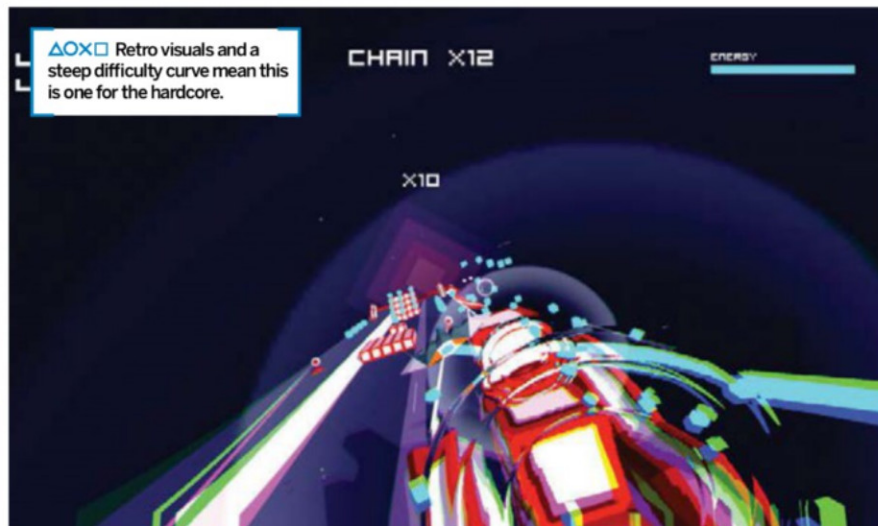
Crytek picked up the *Homefront* brand for pennies in the THQ collapse, and this is what it plans to do with it – an open-world sequel to the forgettable PS3 FPS that pits players as freedom fighters in a future US after invasion and occupation by the Greater Korean Republic. Guerrilla tactics and co-op look interesting, but is sending one of the brands that contributed to the demise of its publisher up against the likes of *COD* and *Battlefield* really the best idea?



FUTURIDIUM EXTENDED PLAY DELUXE

FORMAT: PS4 ETA: 2015

A super-sharp, super-speedy and super-tough version of *Star Fox*, but one where Slippy Toad isn't getting shot all the damn time. That's pretty much what *Futuridium* is but don't let its simple visuals fool you – it's one of the toughest games you'll ever play. Is it just us or does this have 'future PS Plus contender' written all over it? Either way, those who consider themselves pretty hardcore should be all over this beast of a game.



NATURAL DOCTRINE

FORMAT: PS4, PS3, VITA ETA: Q3 2014

One of the strangest games we've seen, *Natural Doctrine* has been out for a few months in Japan but has recently been announced for a Western release. It's a turn-based RPG at its core, but with so many layers of stuff going on that we're not sure we understand what's happening. Once you've managed to get your head around the mechanics, take it online for the next headache – the online mode is actually a card battling game. Um... what?



AARU'S AWAKENING

FORMAT: PS4, PS3 ETA: Q3 2014

A beautiful hand-drawn platformer that uses teleportation rather than jumping for getting around. It's a bit of a headf*** at first but once you get used to using one stick to move, the other to aim your teleports then the triggers to initiate them or perform dashes, it all comes together and looks *awesome*. Worth checking out for the art alone, but the clever gameplay is there too if you're after something deeper than *Rayman*.

INVIZIMALS: THE RESISTANCE

FORMAT: VITA ETA: Q3 2014

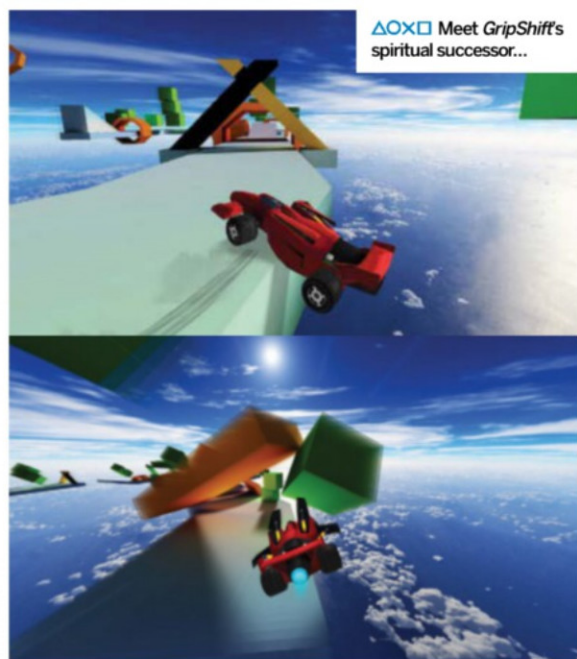
No prizes for guessing where the concept for *Invizimals* – a game about finding, training and battling a collection of strange-looking creatures – came from. Still, this Vita version does away with the reliance on using cards to work its augmented reality magic, making the illusion that you're actually finding and fighting monsters in the real world that much more believable. One of the best showcases for Vita's AR functions, we reckon.



JET CAR STUNTS

FORMAT: PS4, PS3, VITA **ETA:** Q3 2014

An updated version of the popular mobile game, *Jet Car Stunts* is basically a fusion of *Trials* and *GripShift*, and that's absolutely fine with us. The clever blend of racing game and platformer mechanics looks to work pretty well – it did in the mobile versions, at any rate, and this version has been completely reworked to take full advantage of the more powerful hardware.



△○× Meet *GripShift*'s spiritual successor...

MASS EFFECT 4

FORMAT: PS4 **ETA:** 2015

Little is known about BioWare's sci-fi RPG sequel beyond the facts that a) it is in development, b) it will reference but not rely on prior events and knowledge and c) Shepard won't be in it. In fact, it sounds as though the game will be set in a different time or galaxy to the original trilogy, a smart way of side-stepping having to work around *Mass Effect 3*'s notoriously terrible finale. Still some way off, we'd guess – even 2015 seems optimistic at this point.

NUCLEAR THRONE

FORMAT: PS4, PS3, VITA **ETA:** Q4 2014

The new project from Vlambeer (*Luftrausers*, *Ridiculous Fishing*) is a top-down action game that basically plays out like a procedurally generated, post-apocalyptic *Hotline Miami*. Multiple characters, perks and weapons offer countless combinations of possibilities, with random stages and enemy placement sending that already insane number spiraling even closer to infinity and rare Crowns that let you influence the mechanics of the game itself. Sounds ace.



DRAGON BALL XENOVERSE

FORMAT: PS4, PS3 **ETA:** 2015

You can't blame Bandai Namco for churning out *Dragon Ball* games – fans will buy them forever and they've developed into surprisingly good fighting games in their own rights over the years. This one is being handled by Dimpis (who did the *Budokai* games, regarded as series highlights, as well as helping out on *Street Fighter IV*) so expect an even measure of fan service, shouting, technical gameplay and energy beams.



ON YOUR FREE DISC

SWITCH GALAXY ULTRA

FORMAT: PS4, VITA **ETA:** Q3 2014

Imagine if Scalextric cars could travel at hundreds of miles per hour and change lanes at will. Now imagine some evil mastermind littered the track with a devious amount of junk that can *just* be avoided. Good work – you are now thinking about *Switch Galaxy*, a brand new racer that is all about reactions as you rocket through a lane-based *Battletoads* nightmare of obstacles. Fans of *WipeOut* will be fine with the absurd pace, but others might actually die.



△○× Not recommended for those who value their eyesight. Things get pretty hectic...



“A RETURN TO MORE
TRADITIONAL TACTICAL
SHOOTING AS OPPOSED
TO PATRIOTS’ HOLLYWOOD
OBSESSION”

LEAVING LAS VEGAS: THE LONG AND WINDING ROAD TO **RAINBOW SIX: SIEGE**

FORMAT: PS4 ETA: 2015

AUGUST 1998

Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six is released by Red Storm Entertainment (founded by Clancy himself), a unique mix of first-person shooter action and strategic planning for PC. It eventually comes to consoles the following year.

AUGUST 2000

Ubisoft finalises a deal to acquire Red Storm Entertainment, granting the company exclusive access to all videogames carrying the Tom Clancy name.

NOVEMBER 2003

Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six 3 launches for Xbox, quickly establishing itself as one of the first great Xbox Live games by stripping back a few choice features to provide a better console experience. It comes to PlayStation 2 the following March.

SEPTEMBER 2005

Ubisoft throws a spanner in the works with *Rainbow Six: Lockdown* for PS2, Xbox and GameCube – the game is more *Team America* than Tom Clancy and fans are left disappointed with the dumb action focus.

DECEMBER 2006

Ubisoft returns to the series' usual strategic action with *Rainbow Six: Vegas*. The game picks up numerous awards and spawns an almost identical sequel/prequel in 2008.

MARCH 2008

Just after the launch of *Vegas 2*, Ubisoft announces that it has acquired the rights to the Tom Clancy name itself for an unspecified fee.

NOVEMBER 2011

Rainbow 6 Patriots is revealed via laughable CG 'proof of concept' footage, featuring the now-notorious 'press X to kiss wife' QTE.

MARCH 2012

Ubisoft announces that *Patriots'* creative director, lead designer, narrative director and animation director have all been reassigned and will no longer work on the project. No news at E3.

MAY 2013

GameStop delists *Patriots* from its store and cancels all pre-orders. At E3, Ubisoft states that the project has not been cancelled but instead moved to next-gen consoles.

OCTOBER 2013

Author Tom Clancy dies of an undisclosed illness. Ubisoft announces that it will continue to use the Tom Clancy name 'out of respect', and certainly not purely because it already paid through the nose for the privilege a long while ago.

JUNE 2014

Rainbow Six: Siege is revealed at Ubisoft's E3 press conference, a return to more traditional tactical shooting as opposed to *Patriots'* Hollywood obsession that stood to put it in direct competition with *Call Of Duty*. The game's multiplayer focus is shown off through a five-on-five showdown between terrorists and special forces, who must infiltrate a building and recover a hostage. We see destructible environments playing a huge part in battles – with procedural damage altering the map as the match goes on – and a return to the planning stage (and tactical map screen) of earlier games in the series, with both teams given a chance to plan and prepare before each round begins. *Patriots* looked horrible, but *Siege* looks excellent and we can't wait to see more of it.



YOUR PICKS

Bloodborne. Why?
Miyazaki back doing
what he does best.
@ThePigMarcher



"PLAYERS WILL FIND NOTHING IN THE HORRIBLE CITY OF YHARNHAM BUT DISAPPOINTMENT, DISEASE, AND DISASTER"



BLOODBORNE

FORMAT: PS4 ETA: 2015

Sony's big 'surprise' was leaked some way ahead of its official reveal at E3, but at least the name was new – From Software's PlayStation 4 exclusive isn't *Demon's Souls II* or *Project Beast* anymore but *Bloodborne*, ostensibly a new IP albeit one with more than a few things in common with the *Souls* games. It clearly has the same oppressive atmosphere about it and the setting is just as grim as anything in the *Souls* games, if not more so thanks to a shift towards more gothic and traditional horror imagery rather than the dark fantasy stuff that we've grown oddly fond of.

As the title suggests, the story deals with an illness but rather than the cure they seek, players will find nothing in the horrible city of Yharnham but disappointment, disease, and disaster. Turns out this sickness turns those heavily afflicted into hideous beasts, while those infected to a lesser degree might still be controlled or otherwise altered without even recognising that they're not very well. It's a little bit Lovecraft and more than a little bit *Resident Evil 4* – one scene we see has townfolk burning the corpse of an enormous beast (meaning you can sneak past them while they're busy being all barbaric) but they'll still turn hostile if they catch you. Terrifyingly, they'll apparently act dynamically based on in-game influences too. They might still think they're the good guys but if a bell rings to start the next beast hunt and you're wandering the streets, expect to get lynched. Pulling enemies one by one *Souls*-style helps little with this kind of mob mentality, which probably explains why *Bloodborne* is one of the faster From Software games we've ever seen.

Combat will be far more melee-focused than in the *Souls* games – there are no indications so far that there even *is* magic in this universe – and quicker too. The one character we see rocks a transforming scythe/axe/sword thing and a blunderbuss, but various classes and different loadouts will be available in the full game. This one set alone offers multiple play styles simply by allowing players to switch at will between each of the available tools and with quick swipes, heavy swings and short-ranged gun blasts all available, your arsenal isn't left wanting in any department bar perhaps range. But given how *Souls* games have come to fast-track casters to the top of the food chain, we're absolutely fine with that.

Multiplayer is one area that From Software isn't talking about just yet, which is annoying as it's probably the most interesting part of the game. We know that there will still be an online component – there are suggestions that it could place more emphasis on four-player co-op, which wouldn't be in any way surprising given how popular *Monster Hunter* and its myriad clones are – but beyond that, we can but assume that From will be looking to one-up itself and offer all kinds of inventive online play mechanics.

We'll continue to push Sony for a chance to play the game for ourselves (is one phone call an hour enough?) but in the meantime, get hyped for a faster, harder and more brutal *Souls* game in all but name that you can only play on PS4. Oh, and ignore the 31 March release date some websites appear to be reporting – they've apparently never heard of the terms 'placeholder date' or 'financial year'. It *will* be next year, but that date is obviously bollocks.

BLEAKNESS AWAITS

Five more games for those who like it grim

DOOM

FORMAT: PS4, PS3 ETA: 2015

Doom has been in development hell since 2008. Those who bought *Wolfenstein: The New Order* will get beta access to this, plus more should be shown off at QuakeCon.

CALL OF CTHULHU

FORMAT: PS4 ETA: 2015

Few things are bleaker than Lovecraft's works, so *Call Of Cthulhu* stands a chance of being the most horrible game on PS4 if and when it ever decides to squirm its way out.



ONE WAY TRIP

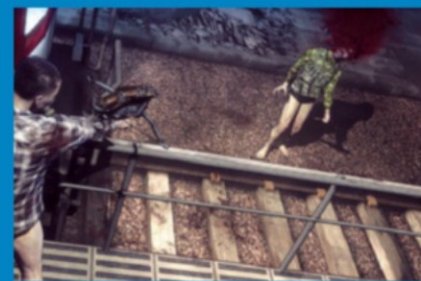
FORMAT: PS4, VITA ETA: Q4 2014

According to project lead Michael Fraunhofer: "it's an exploration of what it would be like to find out you and everyone you love is about to die while your limbs turn into cartoon dolphins." Yikes.

NIGHT IN THE WOODS

FORMAT: PS4 ETA: Q4 2014

It might not look grim, but the game's style makes its subject matter more sinister. There are monsters around, and it's unlikely that a platforming cat will be able to do much about it...



LET IT DIE

FORMAT: PS4 ETA: 2015

Suda 51's latest project is a free-to-play survival game where other players' data is used to create enemies in your game, with their gear up for grabs if you beat them.

SAMURAI WARRIORS 4

FORMAT: PS4, PS3, VITA **ETA:** OCTOBER 2014

Holy balls, it's a new *Warriors* game! We're as surprised as you are, although we have slightly more time for the series now Koei seems to have addressed many problematic areas – *Dynasty Warriors 8* was really good fun. Bringing in elements from some of the Japan-only games, this will allow you to switch between characters at the touch of a button, adding yet more depth to the game. Also, duels are back, which is great news.



TEAM PICKS GUILTY GEAR XRD –SIGN–



THERE'S NOTHING QUITE like that new fighter smell and I can't wait for the new *Guilty Gear*. As much as *BlazBlue* has done to fill

the gap, the newcomers just couldn't quite compare to the amazing cast of Arc's flagship fighter. I'm not happy with the cosmetic changes to my old main Potemkin, though – he's gone from bulky badass to some weird Nazi robot thing with no feet and I just can't get behind that. Fortunately, help is at hand and its name is Bedman, a new character who is just a guy in a robotic bed. Yeah, I'm set.

The stunning 3D visuals manage to make the action look like hand-drawn 2D, but then the camera spins, zooms and pans to follow the over-the-top special moves and instant kill attacks. It's amazing. There's no European date for this yet but even if it means importing it, I'll be all over this from day freaking one.

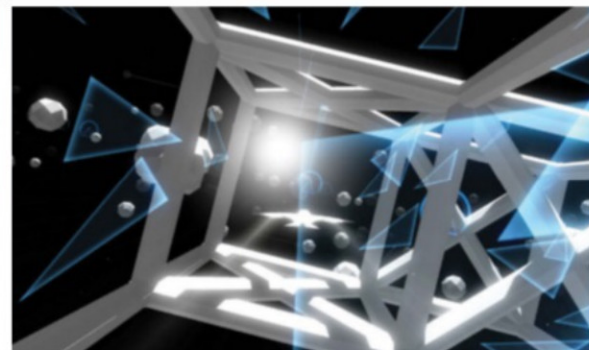
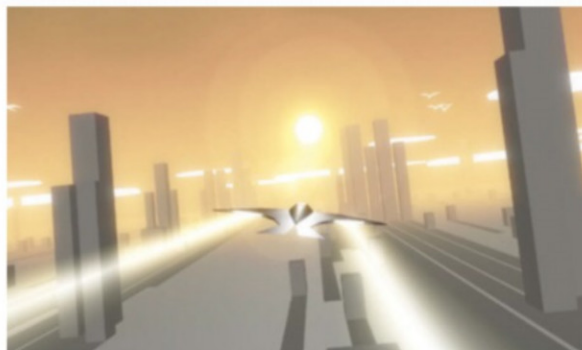
LUKE ALBIGÉS



RACE THE SUN

FORMAT: PS4, PS3, VITA **ETA:** 2015

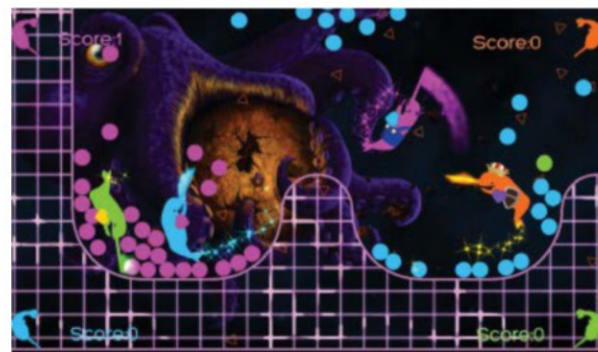
Effectively an into-the-screen endless runner where you have to keep up with the sun – the power source for your ridiculously fast spaceship thing – as it threatens to set and bring your run to an end. The world is regenerated every day from a bunch of building blocks created by the team, meaning that you can only chase a spot on the leaderboards on the easy levels you stumble upon for so long before your world turns impossible and a friend gets an easy chance to one-up you. Pretty intense.



STARWHAL: JUST THE TIP

FORMAT: PS4, PS3 **ETA:** Q3 2014

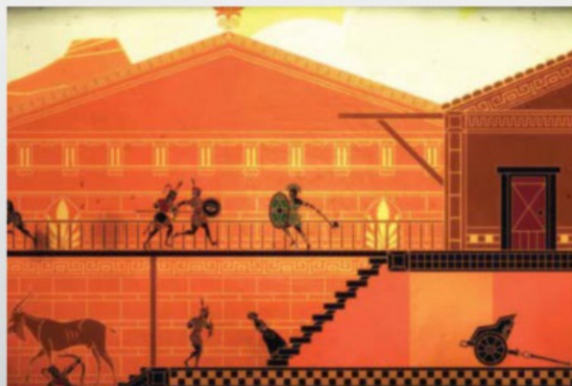
It's a little annoying that developers have chosen the generation where controllers cost more than games to bring back local multiplayer, but we're glad to have it back all the same. Like *Sportsfriends* and *Towerfall*, this is a quickfire competitive multiplayer arena where the idea is to play for hours on end and troll your mates when you absolutely destroy them, time and time again. And in that respect, we fully endorse it.



APOTHEON

FORMAT: PS4 **ETA:** Q4 2014

Basically *Guacamelee!* as an ancient Greek pottery painting... that's what we think when we see *Apotheon* and, to be honest, that's no bad thing at all. The emphasis of the game isn't on learning weapon combos, rather finding the perfect time to roll behind a foe and land the killing strike. Additionally, Bronze Age weaponry does tend to throw something of a spanner in the works, frequently breaking and forcing players to experiment with a variety of new tools rather than relying on a favourite. Kratos would approve of *Apotheon*, we feel.



SURGEON SIMULATOR 2013

FORMAT: PS4 **ETA:** Q4 2014

Arriving a year later than the date in its title is just the first of many jokes when it comes to *Surgeon Simulator 2013* – the whole thing is basically one long joke at the expense of proper 'simulation' games that tend to take things too far. We're not sure how controlling each finger independently will translate to a pad rather than a keyboard but hey, this innards-wrecking adventure in medicine will probably be even funnier if it doesn't work. It is *horribly* difficult, mind.



RISE OF THE TOMB RAIDER

FORMAT: PS4 ETA: 2015

After the deer-stalking cultist shiv-'em-up that was 2013's *Tomb Raider* origin story, Lara Croft is back with, er, another origin story. In *Rise Of The Tomb Raider* (due out 2015), it seems that all that casual murdering of folks and constant brushes with grizzly death have taken their toll, landing Lara in therapy with a psychiatrist who's keen for her to pick up a hobby to distract her from past traumas (we're thinking archery).

Beyond the trailer – which also features Miss Croft fleeing from an angry bear, falling down a ravine and pinging an arrow into the back of the

head of some poor mercenary-type – we don't know much more about *Rise*, besides to say that it's coming to PS4 and, if an errant Amazon listing is to be believed, PS3 as well.

But that doesn't mean we can't pull our speculation caps on and make some informed predictions. From the trailer, it looks like developer Crystal Dynamics is sticking close to the elements that made Lara's 2013 outing a success: the chase sequence with the bear reminds us of those QTE showdowns with the first game's wolf pack; the mountain tumble

ends with Lara dangling over a drop by her climbing axe, which says to us that those rock climbing segments will be back; and finally, that gun-toting merc that Lara pincushions with her bow was distracted by a flare before being dispatched – suggesting that creeping about and attacking from the shadows is still a better strategy than going toe-to-toe.

So, that's our analysis: *Tomb Raider*, but darker. Though if this is the game in which Lara finally discovers her love of blasting dinosaurs in the face with rocket launchers, that'd be fine.

ON YOUR
FREE DISC



TEMPLE OF OSIRIS

Speculation caps off – time for something more concrete. While Crystal Dynamics was all coy about Lara's triple-A return in *Rise*, it was a little chattier on the subject of the other *Tomb Raider* game to debut at E3: *Lara Croft And The Temple Of Osiris*.

Following on from 2010's *Guardian Of Light*, *Temple Of Osiris* is a top-down puzzler that takes one look at its bigger cousin's gritty realism, laughs, then kicks it off a bridge – which is why this four-player co-op adventure has Lara raiding tombs alongside the Egyptian gods Isis and Horus, instead of sitting in a shrink's office looking all glum.

You can play the game solo if you like (if you're some sort of misanthrope) but according to the developers, *Temple Of Osiris* is best played as a team sport. Playing cooperatively opens up new ways to solve puzzles, with its four characters making use of their special abilities to progress: the gods, for example, have a magical staff that can be used to solve light puzzles, while Lara's grappling hook lets her swing back and forth across gaps like a relic-thieving executive toy.

“THE CHASE SEQUENCE WITH THE BEAR REMINDS US OF THOSE QTE SHOWDOWNS WITH THE FIRST GAME'S WOLF PACK”

△○×□ Pagan Min is not a nice man, which you'll know if you've seen the trailer.



FAR CRY 4

FORMAT: PS4, PS3 ETA: NOVEMBER 2014

Five reasons to get excited for Ubisoft's open-world sequel

THE SETTING

The Himalayas might not be the most obvious setting for a game but on closer inspection, there's mad potential there. From the verticality on which *Far Cry* games thrive to the rich wildlife on which they have come to rely to offer non-human opposition, even a fictional country – in this case Kyrat – based in these parts can offer variety and, more importantly, danger.

THE VILLAIN

Pagan Min isn't your typical bad guy – indeed, when you first meet, he seems perfectly pleasant. Well, to you, at least. Other people who he doesn't like tend to end up a bit more... well, dead. A sociopath to Vaas' straight-up psychopath, Pagan Min will be an interesting character to get to know, although we hope Ubisoft doesn't bottle it and kill him off early.

THE CO-OP

One amazing PlayStation-exclusive feature of *Far Cry 4* is the ability to invite your friends to play in co-op even if they don't own the game. Invites will be limited but still, this is an incredibly forward-thinking feature on Ubisoft's part and one that should get

the game into the hands of more players. And in the right circumstances, too – since when has playing something cooperatively with a friend *not* been fun?

THE ELEPHANTS

Shooting a cage to release a wild tiger in *Far Cry 3* was one thing, but this sequel will afford players even more control over nature. Riding an elephant into battle is cool enough alone, but seeing it stomp off after you dismount to attack those whose stray bullets meant for you clip its flapping ears is priceless. Why bother shooting anyone when nature can do all the hard work for you?

THE OUTPOSTS

We'd like to think that *Far Cry 3*'s post-launch patch is an indication that Ubisoft has learned its lesson regarding finite resources – if you cleared the lot, the map was basically deserted. We expect no such oversights from *Far Cry 4*, especially since the drop-in-drop-out cooperative play will allow you to join a friend's game and raid a base you've already blitzed all over again.



POINTS OF VIEW

Five alternative first-person experiences



AMONG THE SLEEP

FORMAT: PS4 ETA: Q3 2014

Casting you as a child in a world he doesn't understand and one made more terrifying by his imagination, this is one of the more interesting first-person titles we've seen.

VIZIONECK

FORMAT: PS4, PS3 ETA: Q4 2014

If you thought it was impossible to make an original FPS, this oddity would like a word. Players control cubes that can blend perfectly with the environment in a stylish and competitive game.

BLUE ESTATE

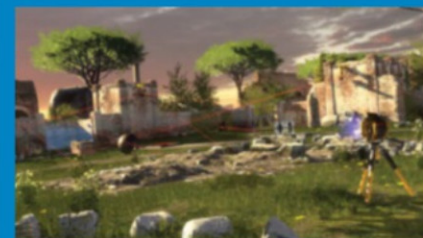
FORMAT: PS4 ETA: OUT NOW

This first-person, on-rails shooter uses the gyroscope of the DualShock 4 to turn it into a makeshift light gun as you blast your way through a graphic novel.

CRITERION PROJECT (TITLE TBC)

FORMAT: TBC ETA: 2015

The brains behind *Burnout* have shown off a little of their new unnamed project at last. It's a first-person racing game with all kinds of vehicles, from jet-skis and quads to boats and wingsuits.



THE TALOS PRINCIPLE

FORMAT: PS4 ETA: 2015

The *Serious Sam* team ditches the retro shooter for a different kind of first-person adventure, this time a puzzle game that explores ruins from various different periods of history.

AKIBA'S TRIP: UNDEAD & UNDRESSED

FORMAT: PS3, VITA **ETA:** Q3 2014

Thought *Monster Monpiece* was a bit much? We raise you a game where sexy vampires are terrorising Tokyo's famous Akihabara district (where all the cool shops and arcades are) and the only way to defeat them is to rip their clothes off and let the sun finish them off. We're all for having obscure Japanese games localised, but this feels like it might be one cultural difference too far.



PLANTS VERSUS ZOMBIES: GARDEN WARFARE

FORMAT: PS4, PS3 **ETA:** AUGUST 2014

We thought this was a bad joke when we first heard about it, but no – EA really *did* get PopCap to make a multiplayer third-person shooter. By all accounts, it's a pretty good one too (it's been out since the beginning of the year on other platforms) but with the game launching just before a slew of high-profile shooters, we'd argue that EA has left it a bit too late to raise the dead on PS4.



FORMA.8

FORMAT: PS4, VITA **ETA:** Q4 2014

With *Futuridium* pretty much done, Italian indie MixedBag lives up to its name by following the on-rails racer with this exploration-focused Metroidvania game. It's slick as all hell thanks to hand-drawn vector graphics, plus everything is physics-based and the entire game will play out without dialogue, instead directing and informing players via visual clues and gameplay.



FLYHUNTER ORIGINS

FORMAT: VITA **ETA:** Q3 2014

Ripstone is really showing a keen eye for spotting great indie titles and this latest acquisition looks to be no different. It's a 3D platformer of sorts, coming from a team of movie animators (hence the Dreamworks/Pixar style) and oddly, that's a genre that is underrepresented on Vita.



REAPER

FORMAT: VITA **ETA:** Q4 2014

Originally announced for PSP in 2010, this free-to-play action-RPG looks to tell the origin story of Death himself. Attacks, summons and gear are all handled with a card system, though whether this means equipping them permanently or repeatedly milling through a deck as in *Kingdom Hearts: Chain Of Memories* is unclear. In any case, we don't turn down free Vita games.

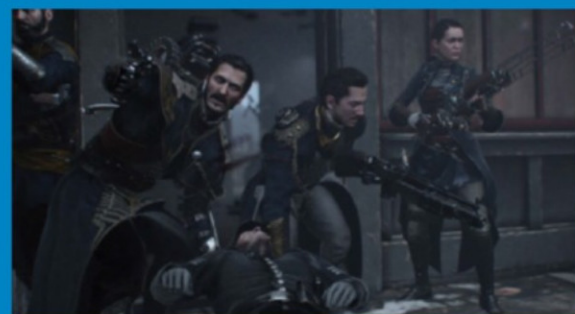


WHAT YOU'RE SAYING

f For me the last of us I missed it on the PS3 and didn't know much about it until attending the gaming baftas it won a few and from what I could see was an amazing game figured I would hold out for the PS4 same game only better graphics!
Wayne Young

t absolutely the division. Though the order 1886 it's on my list as well.
@mrbohando

t The Order, because it just looks amazing and the remaster of Grim Fandango - one of my all-time favourite games
@JonnBlanchard



f uncharted 4 naughty dog just get better with each new game cant wait
Darren Jones

t Call of Duty 23. Has that been announced yet? Anyway I'll be excited in 2023 when it arrives. Maybe.
@rbs_york

t If MGSV:TPP includes a co-op I will jinx in my palls
@Greatfanalyst

t I can't wait for No Man's Sky. I'm aware we don't know much about it but ... exploration! DINOSAURS!
@SJHollis_

THE GOLF CLUB

FORMAT: PS4 ETA: Q3 2014

If you've given up on the *Tiger Woods* games over recent years, this might be the game to get you back out on the fairway. Developed by a team that has been doing ports of EA Sports games for years and looking to add the same kind of social layer to golf that *Driveclub* is bringing to racing, *The Golf Club* will be first to tee off on PS4 – EA's post-Tiger PGA release doesn't arrive until early next year.



ABZU

FORMAT: PS4 ETA: 2016

Still no word on what's next for thatgamecompany, but *Journey*'s art director has formed a new studio to develop this underwater oddity. It looks to have a lot of the same serene mystery as the indie favourite, but will it capture hearts and pick up Game Of The Year gongs itself? Looks like we'll be waiting a couple of years before we find out...



REEL FISHING: MASTER'S CHALLENGE

FORMAT: VITA ETA: Q3 2014

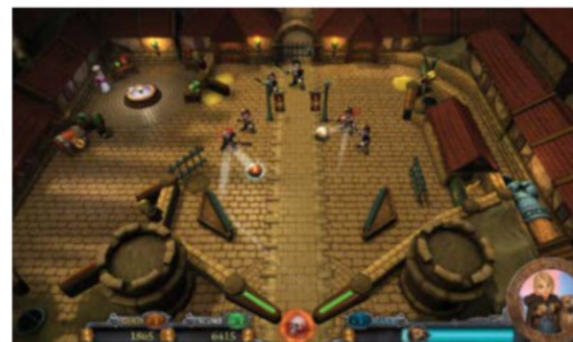
The real reason Vita hasn't performed as well as Sony hoped is clearly the lack of good fishing games for the handheld. Natsume is looking to rectify this with *Master's Challenge*, the reveal trailer for which spends more time banging on about a message from the narrator's dad than it does showing what the fishing actually looks like and entails. It'll probably be quite a lot like fishing.



ROLLERS OF THE REALM

FORMAT: PS4, VITA ETA: NOVEMBER 2014

There's a really cool table in *Pinball FX 2* that adds RPG-lite mechanics to the marble madness, but Atlus is taking it to the next level with what we assume to be the world's first full pinball RPG. Ten playable characters (who take the form of balls, obviously) each have their own stats and physics as you smash enemies, grab loot and flip your way to victory.



TEAM PICKS

PERSONA 5



I'M A HUGE *Persona* fan, with *Persona 3* and *4* being two of my favourite JRPGs of all time.

While the various spinoffs over the last few years have done much to satiate my burning appetite for more *Persona* (the awesome *Persona 4 Arena* in particular) I've been waiting for years for a proper sequel.

I'm still going to be waiting a while longer, but at least now I know that *Persona 5* is indeed a thing and all the key members of *Persona* Team are returning to their old roles. Yes, it's still only a PS3 game, but *Persona* has always been a generation behind and still managed to be the best modern JRPG series, so I'm not too concerned. It's coming to Japan later this year and America early 2015, so hopefully a Europe release will follow shortly. If not, I'll just import it!

SAM SMITH



DISNEY INFINITY 2.0: MARVEL SUPER HEROES

FORMAT: PS4, PS3 **ETA:** SEPTEMBER 2014

The original game's collection of cool figures was perilous enough for the wallets of giant children everywhere, but adding Marvel characters into the mix to bring in geek dollars too is a masterstroke. Play Sets based on The Avengers and Spider-Man are more in-depth than those of the original (with skill trees and everything) plus the creation stuff is simpler and deeper too. Bye, money.



BROFORCE

FORMAT: PS4, VITA **ETA:** 2015

The backlash to *Mercenary Kings* made us sad, as the game was far better than all the 16-bit abuse it got suggested. Undeterred by this, *Broforce* plays very much a similar tune – it's a mix of *Metal Slug* gameplay and Eighties action movies all built out of tiny squares, and it's awesome. If you're playing the game and nothing is exploding or on fire, you're doing it wrong.



TO LEAVE

FORMAT: PS4, VITA **ETA:** Q1 2015

The first PlayStation game ever developed in Ecuador, *To Leave* looks like a trippy version of *Velocity* with a kid riding a flying door in place of a spaceship. While the concept might sound daft and light-hearted, the narrative side of the game actually seems surprisingly dark – more so than a flying door would suggest, anyway. If anyone should ever ask you what an indie game is, point them in this direction.



SHIN JIGEN GAME NEPTUNE VII

FORMAT: PS4 **ETA:** 2015

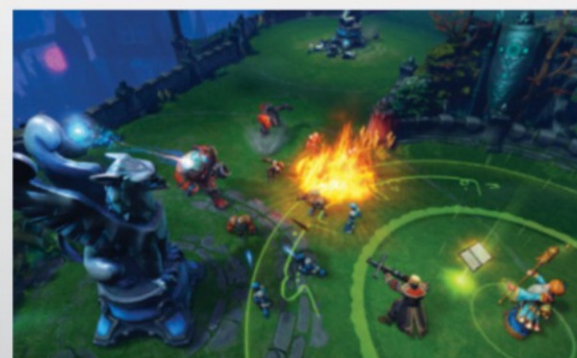
Compile Heart's RPG series has long been better in concept (each of its characters represents a retro console) than execution, but hopefully that'll change in the jump to PS4. It probably doesn't help that Compile Heart somehow churns these games out at a rate of about two a year, but starved as we are for PS4 JRPGs, we'll probably play it however it turns out. Oh, and that number in the title? It actually means V-2, not seven, confusingly.



ARENA OF FATE

FORMAT: PS4 **ETA:** Q3 2014

The ongoing success of *League Of Legends* and *DOTA 2* proves that the MOBA scene is still going strong and unsurprisingly, everyone wants a slice of delicious money pie. This is Crytek's stab at the popular genre, with a cast of characters assembled from historical figures and famous fictional creations – you'll be able to pit Joan Of Arc against Red Riding Hood should you so choose, and we can't wait to see which other stars of history and fiction make the roster for the final version. It's free-to-play, too. Obviously.



SUPER EXPLODING ZOO

FORMAT: PS4, VITA ETA: Q3 2014

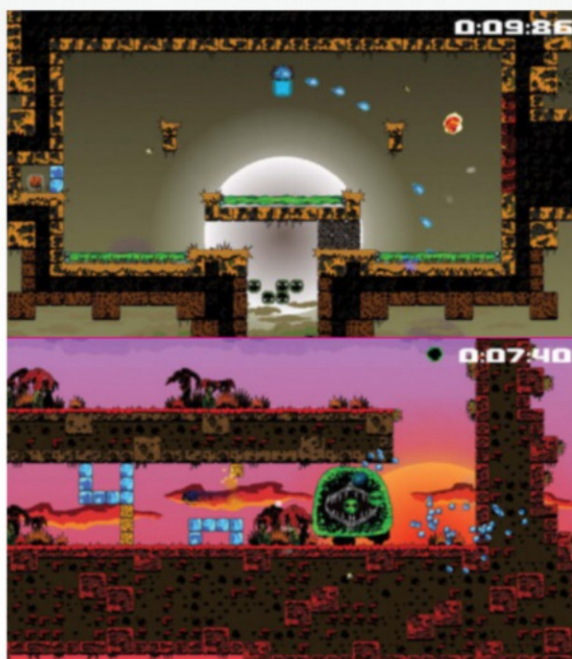
We were sold on Honeyslug's new game based on the name alone but, fortunately, it looks like the gameplay might actually be decent as well. Well, we say that but we still don't really have a clue what's going on. But just look at those cute little things! And they explode! Brilliant.



SHINING RESONANCE

FORMAT: PS3 ETA: 2015

Given that not one of Sega's *Shining* games has seen a Western release in the last decade, it seems unlikely that this latest action-RPG will buck that trend. If *Wild Arms* developer Media Vision does a good job with it, though, the region-free nature of the PS3 will still allow us to play as dragons. Which is nice.



FENIX RAGE

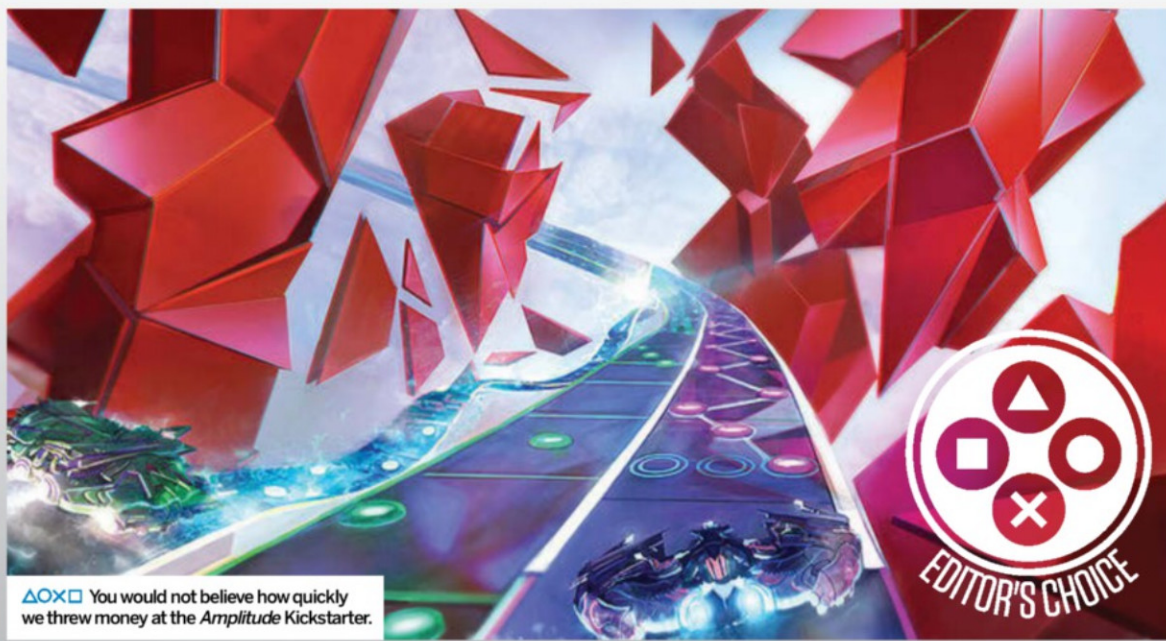
FORMAT: PS4 ETA: Q4 2014

If you're a fan of *Super Meat Boy*, this one should be on your wishlist. *Fenix Rage* follows the same basic format – short, insanely tough levels, fluid character movement and more going on than most human brains will be able to manage – and the prize at the end of each of its arduous trials? A cookie. Yes, really. If it were us, we'd probably just pop down the supermarket and buy a pack rather than endure hellish trials like these.

AMPLITUDE

FORMAT: PS4, PS3 ETA: Q1 2015

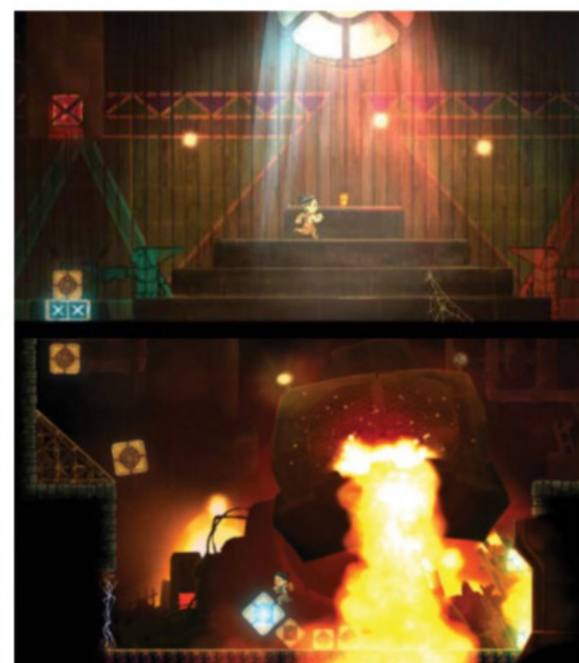
It looked a bit shaky for a while there but in its final few hours, Harmonix's Kickstarter campaign to reboot classic PS2 rhythm-action title *Amplitude* managed to hit its funding target. For those unaware, *Amplitude* was what Harmonix did just before *Guitar Hero* and remains one of the best music games ever made. While it won't have a licensed soundtrack this time, Harmonix's team and contacts mean the music will still be awesome. Go play *Rock Band Blitz* to give your fingers a warm-up.



TESLAGRAD

FORMAT: PS3, VITA ETA: 2015

A novel twist on the usual puzzle-platformer template where magnetic objects allow you to quickly repel and attract your way through beautiful hand-drawn environments. There's no text or dialogue in the entire game either, leaving everything to be revealed and explained visually. Magnetic puzzles take a while to get used to but once the mechanic clicks, anyone watching will just think you're a gaming god.



△×□ Trevor will be 29 per cent crazier thanks to the extra processing power of the PS4.



GRAND THEFT AUTO V

FORMAT: PS4 ETA: Q4 2014

News that Rockstar is hard at work on a PS4 version of one of the most successful videogames ever made should come as a surprise to literally nobody, especially when we've been predicting just such a port since before the console was even released. What *is* surprising, though, is just how much better the game's world is on PS4. 'Density' is probably the one word that sums it all up best – visuals are better, obviously, but it's the increased activity on the streets of Los Santos that makes it feel that much more like the real city it so brazenly mimics. Cars now sit in congestion for miles in busy areas, while there are even more people walking the streets at any given time. It's amazing what even the slightest increase in draw distance can do and all of a sudden, we're confronted with a totally different city to the one we've

already spent hundreds of hours exploring – one bustling with life and one that we're more than willing to hold to ransom all over again.

Even arriving on the eve of a new generation, *GTA V* was never going to suffer on a commercial level (because *GTA*) but you could practically hear the PS3 heave and sigh with every frame it had to render. Rockstar worked all kinds of magic just getting the game running on last-gen consoles, so this will be our chance to see an unhindered version of that same vision. Plus, online heists might actually be ready to go by the time the PS4 version ships. The online side of the game in general has evolved considerably since it first went live, so being able to enjoy that without the audible sound of a tech ceiling being scraped is almost reason enough to return to the game on PS4.

OLD IS NEW

HD remakes continue to be all the rage

METRO REDUX

FORMAT: PS4 ETA: Q3 2014

Metro 2033 and sequel *Last Light* blast their way onto PS4 later this year. All the gameplay improvements of the second game have been applied to the original, too.



FINAL FANTASY TYPE-0 HD

FORMAT: PS4 ETA: 2015

Fans have been calling for this Japan-only PSP RPG to be localised for years, but we all assumed that if it did happen, it'd come to Vita. Instead, Square surprised us with the news that it was doing a full HD job for PS4.



DISGAEA 4:

A PROMISE REVISITED

FORMAT: VITA ETA: Q3 2014

Few games offer better value for money, especially when NIS seems intent on releasing every version on multiple consoles. Fortunately, we love Prinnyes enough to play every single iteration.

MINECRAFT

FORMAT: PS4, VITA ETA: Q3 2014

Despite being available on literally every other gaming platform, *Minecraft* still isn't on PS4 or Vita. The good news is that it's still coming, but will the bubble finally have burst by the time it arrives?

GRIM FANDANGO

FORMAT: PS4 ETA: Q1 2015

The classic point-and-click is coming to PlayStation, and only 15 years late! Still, it's one of the best games we've ever played, so we can't complain.

YOUR PICKS

Battlefield: Hardline and all its cops and robbers
glory PEW PEW PEW
@KezTheBear

"WE RESEARCHED
WHAT COPS USE
AND DISCOVERED
THAT THEY HAVE
SOME REALLY
COOL STUFF"

BATTLEFIELD HARDLINE

FORMAT: PS4, PS3 ETA: OCTOBER 2014

Visceral Games producer Steve Papoutsis explains the series' new direction

Why did you decide to jump straight in with a beta, rather than go the more traditional route of drip-feeding information?

One of our early thoughts about doing the closed Beta is that, as gamers, when people come out and do a story about a game or show screenshots it leaves all of this room for speculation. So we thought, instead of showing people let's let them play it, let's get this game in people's hands so that they can form their own opinion of what we're doing. Our second objective was that we would show that we could not only to create a great multiplayer map, which we had done on the End Game expansion, but also that we could go through all of the challenges of launching something stable.

Does the new theme allow you to have a bit more fun developing game modes and narrative structure?

One of the things that was always cool about *Battlefield* for me was the way they could move from era to era and location to location. So, that opened up the conversation to 'well, what

other eras and locations could we look at?' We started talking about cops and robbers and it turned out that DICE had also been talking about that before so we discussed that with the team. The first thing that we did was discuss how it mapped to *Battlefield* and how we preserved the DNA of *Battlefield*. *Battlefield* is all about team play, strategy, destruction and we could do those things and add in the gadgets, weapons and vehicles. We researched what kinds of things cops use these days and discovered that they have some really cool stuff: heavy attack trucks, helicopters, planes, in addition to the conventional weapons. We did the same thing with criminals from films and TV and came up with a whole host of weapons, vehicles and gadgets from that too.

Is it a deliberate attempt to draw new people in to *Battlefield* who aren't usually into it?

Part of the initial conversation was really about what Visceral could bring to the franchise from a single-player perspective. Making one of these games is a tremendous amount of effort

and there's so much content here that it had to be a full game.

As *Battlefield* players we made a whole list of what we could improve on or add to the franchise. If you're new to the franchise, those first few hours can be overwhelming – the emphasis of team play and the way in which the classes interact with one another, the intricacies of doing something like flying a helicopter and so depending on who you're playing with those initial experiences can be pretty brutal.

We wanted to add more accessibility and ensure that team play was encouraged in a positive manner rather than something you were penalised for not doing properly. Then we took it to another level and instead of having to drop med-packs or ammo-packs for other players to pick up they can take them off you if you have them equipped to speed everything up; you're still getting the cash – our version of experience – for providing that service but you're not being yelled at because you might not know how to even drop a health pack.



WITHOUT MEMORY

FORMAT: PS4 **ETA:** 2016

The first project from brilliantly named new Russian start-up Dinosaurium Games, *Without Memory* will be a PS4-exclusive psychological thriller inspired by Quantic Dream games such as *Heavy Rain* and *Beyond: Two Souls*. Announcing the game with no screenshots two years ahead of its planned launch could be seen as a little premature, though...



TITAN SOULS

FORMAT: PS4, VITA **ETA:** Q3 2014

An enhanced version of a game developed in just 72 hours for Ludum Dare game jam, this beautiful indie project blends elements of *Dark Souls*, *Shadow Of The Colossus* and *TowerFall* into one utterly unique adventure. 20 giant bosses await, but you only have one retrievable arrow with which to slay them. You'll die. A lot. But you'll get better every time, and you'll love it.

CHASM

FORMAT: PS4 **ETA:** Q4 2014

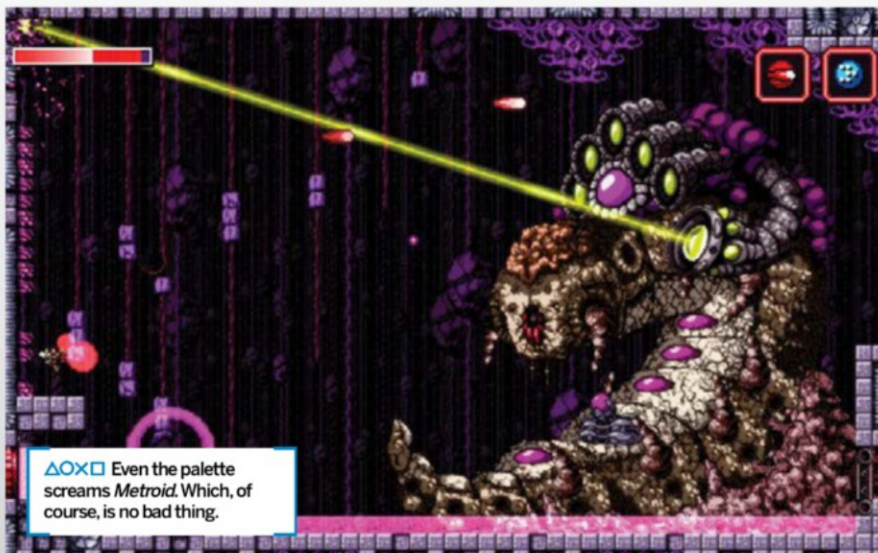
Making an action-RPG by combining the exploration of *Super Metroid* with the procedural generation of *Spelunky* sounds like it could produce the single greatest game of all time – effectively a version of *Symphony Of The Night* where everything is different each time you play, but still controlled tightly enough that it always works. That sounds incredible and even though the pixel art might not be to everyone's tastes, *Chasm* has replayability and accessibility on its side.



AXIOM VERGE

FORMAT: PS4, VITA **ETA:** 2015

A few of the games on this list seem to cite *Super Metroid* as an influence, but *Axiom Verge* takes it one step further by actually wanting to be *Metroid*. Nintendo clearly has no plans for the franchise – it has toys and an underperforming console to try and shift first – so this one-man take on the classic series is welcome indeed. Let's just hope Nintendo doesn't see what said one-man team is capable of and snap him up for *Metroid*. That said, though, we'd probably be fine with just this for a while.



DANGANRONPA 2: GOODBYE DESPAIR

FORMAT: VITA **ETA:** Q3 2014

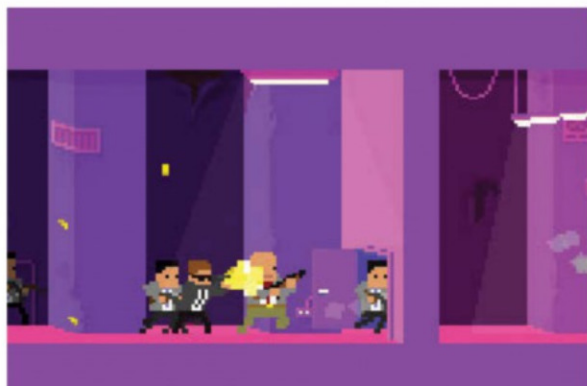
Part visual novel, part murder mystery, part court game and all utterly bonkers, *Danganronpa 2* follows a bunch of school kids once again tormented by an evil teddy bear. If you think visual novels are boring, it's probably just because you haven't played one with bullet hell shooter and rhythm-action mini-games yet. Get on that.



NOT A HERO

FORMAT: PS4, VITA ETA: Q1 2015

Roll7 shot to fame after the tiny team managed to deliver the new *Tony Hawk* game that Activision couldn't with *OlliOlli*, and its new game looks to apply the same kind of quickfire gameplay to the shooter genre. Expect optional objectives, score targets and a lot of high-octane pixel art cover-shooting from this exciting, innovative little developer.



HYPER LIGHT DRIFTER

FORMAT: PS4, VITA ETA: Q4 2014

Having smashed its Kickstarter goal more than 20 times over, it's safe to say that people are pretty excited by this one. Little wonder, considering the *Zelda*-inspired adventure looks absolutely amazing and has the guy behind *Fez*'s music plinking the plonks. We are very much sold. No, literally – we already paid for a copy.



HOME

FORMAT: PS4, VITA ETA: Q4 2014

No, it's not the return of failed social experiment PlayStation Home on every other platform – this *Lone Survivor*-esque 2D horror game is another indie sensation fresh from PC and mobile glory and ready to do the business on PlayStation. A Halloween PS Plus debut seems like an absolute no-brainer, although the tail end of the year is starting to look a little bit too stacked for sensible indies to be taking chances.



COSTUME QUEST 2

FORMAT: PS4, PS3 ETA: Q4 2014

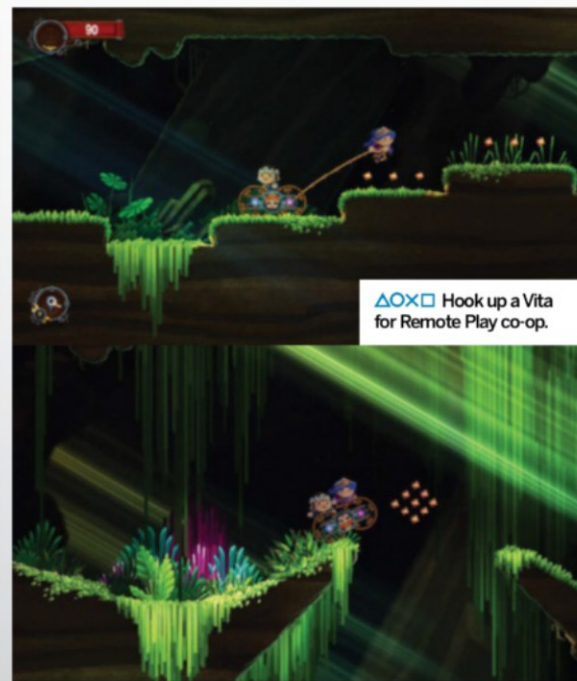
We'd never have put money on Double Fine's first ever sequel being another *Costume Quest* game but now, we wish we had. The dress-up follow-up will add even more outfits (rubbish get-ups that magically turn into amazing characters when RPG battles kick off) and, as expected, will be out in time for Hallowe'en.



CHARIOT

FORMAT: PS4 ETA: Q3 2014

A physics-based platform game with an emphasis on local co-op, this strange little game is about guiding the titular chariot (which houses the soul of a deceased king) through many an underground maze in search of riches with which to honour the patriarch-turned-inconvenient-escort.



WHAT YOU'RE SAYING...

f Mass effect 4. My favorite videogame series. Grabbed me from the start. The story is so cool and I actually cared about the characters. Only game series that really did that for me

Paul Jones

f Final Fantasy XV, because the other 14 or so have been rather splendid.

Sandy Waller

t Alien : Isolation, cause they're isn't enough survival scare horror games on consoles, and this looks fantastic. Even for SEGA!

@Liam_The_Zombie

t kingdom heart 3 and uncharted 4 a thief end. Love these game to bits :D

@SaraC0911

t i can't wait for The Phantom Pain, game is gonna be so awesome

@oldmario

f Mad Max. Been a fan of the films since childhood. Curious to see if they can do it justice.

John Murray

t Last of Us because I missed out on last gen, and Shadows of Mordor

@LiQBKLYN



f Destiny is going to break my will power into buying a PS4 me thinks!!

Phil Robinson

t Far Cry 4!!! One word sums up the hype, ELEPHANTS!!

@Ginjured

f Uncharted 4: A Thief's End. Looks like it's going to be the last in the series/ Drake's story. Naughty Dog always knock it out of the park and I can't wait to see what they can achieve with the PlayStation 4's power.

Adam Endacott



△○×□ Character models may not be mind-blowing but the animation is incredible.

NHL 15

FORMAT: PS4, PS3 **ETA:** SEPTEMBER 2014

EA's first sporting PS4 outing made great strides in terms of mechanics, but few at launch would have told you to look to *FIFA* to see what a next-gen game could and should look like. *UFC* has given us a hint that EA's studios are starting to really get to grips with the new Ignite engine, but rolling that level of detail out to every player in team games is going to be a serious effort. As such, no wonder it's the games with fewer players that are looking best right now – *UFC* has the next-gen look down and *FIFA* had physics and animation covered, leaving *NHL* to slot somewhere between the two. It looks great but it's the movement that has impressed most so far, with the physical nature of the sport allowing for collisions and impacts that impress (*UFC*) rather than frustrate (*FIFA*). If the final game can live up to the target stuff we've seen so far, it'll be a slight squint away from watching a real match on TV.

Many of this year's improvements revolve around physics – the aforementioned player collisions for one, as well as cloth physics for shirts on a par with *NBA 2K14*'s vests and shorts as well as all-new puck physics apparently overseen by one of the software engineers who worked on the Large Hadron Collider. Whether or not that guy knew anything about hockey was not disclosed but since a puck is basically just a really big particle, it's probably exactly the same. Elsewhere, EA is trying to pull the game in line with *FIFA* from a presentation perspective, meaning improved arenas, crowds, commentary and enhanced broadcast-style visuals and effects. Still, so long as it can deliver an entertaining game of hockey without getting overly bogged down in simulation elements and over-complex controls that take a week to explain, we'll be all over this.

SEASON'S GREETINGS

Meet this year's new sporting heroes

NBA 2K15

FORMAT: PS4, PS3

ETA: OCTOBER 2014

Tired of trailers that show CG footage of what the series might look like? Then you'll love 2K's approach – the *NBA 2K15* trailer just uses footage from last year's game.

PES 2015

FORMAT: PS4, PS3

ETA: OCTOBER 2014

Konami's decision to not push out a PS4 port of *PES* was admirable, with its efforts devoted to getting this year's debut right. It looks the part, but we still need to get our hands on it to see if the *PES* magic is back.



WWE 2K15

FORMAT: PS4, PS3 **ETA:** OCTOBER 2014

We were hoping for a fresh start on PS4, but we got the next best thing – Visual Concepts seems to be headlining development with Yuke's helping out, meaning we'll likely see something more authentic.

EA SPORTS PGA TOUR

FORMAT: PS4, PS3 **ETA:** 2015

After 15 years of *Tiger Woods*, EA has finally returned to the purer brand. Rather than the Ignite engine, *PGA* will use Frostbite 3 in order to make for a prettier golf than the golf you are already golfing. Golf!



LACROSSE 15

FORMAT: PS4, PS3 **ETA:** TBC

Some sports games never enjoy the same success as those based on football. This stands to change that, with the full support of our designer Liam, who declared the existence of the game to be "outstanding".

MORTAL KOMBAT X

FORMAT: PS4, PS3 ETA: 2015

NetherRealm seems to be coming into its own lately, with *Injustice* technically a far more adept fighting game than the last *Mortal Kombat* and this one looking to iron out even more kinks and provide the studio's best fighter yet. But you don't care about that. You care about the Fatalities, just like everyone else. Each character looks to have five slots for different finishing moves – here's a gruesome rundown of the ones we've seen so far.

SCORPION

Only the first part of Scorpion's new fatality has been seen by most people, but that's intentional – it's one of the most graphic yet. You've seen him chuck a fireball through the loser's chest to reveal a dangling heart and then take out a sword, but what happens next? Let's just say it's not very pleasant...

SUB-ZERO

After freezing the opponent's chest, Sub punches the ice to leave a gaping hole that exposes the spine. Reaching in, he brutally snaps it in two before using it as leverage to lift the victim aloft and rip them clean in half.

CASSIE CAGE

Reaching for her handgun, Cassie pops a shot into each of the opponent's lower legs to drop them to their knees and then executes them with a close-range headshot. To add insult to injury, she spits out her bubble gum and covers the head wound, causing a bloody bubble to inflate and then burst.

D'VORAH

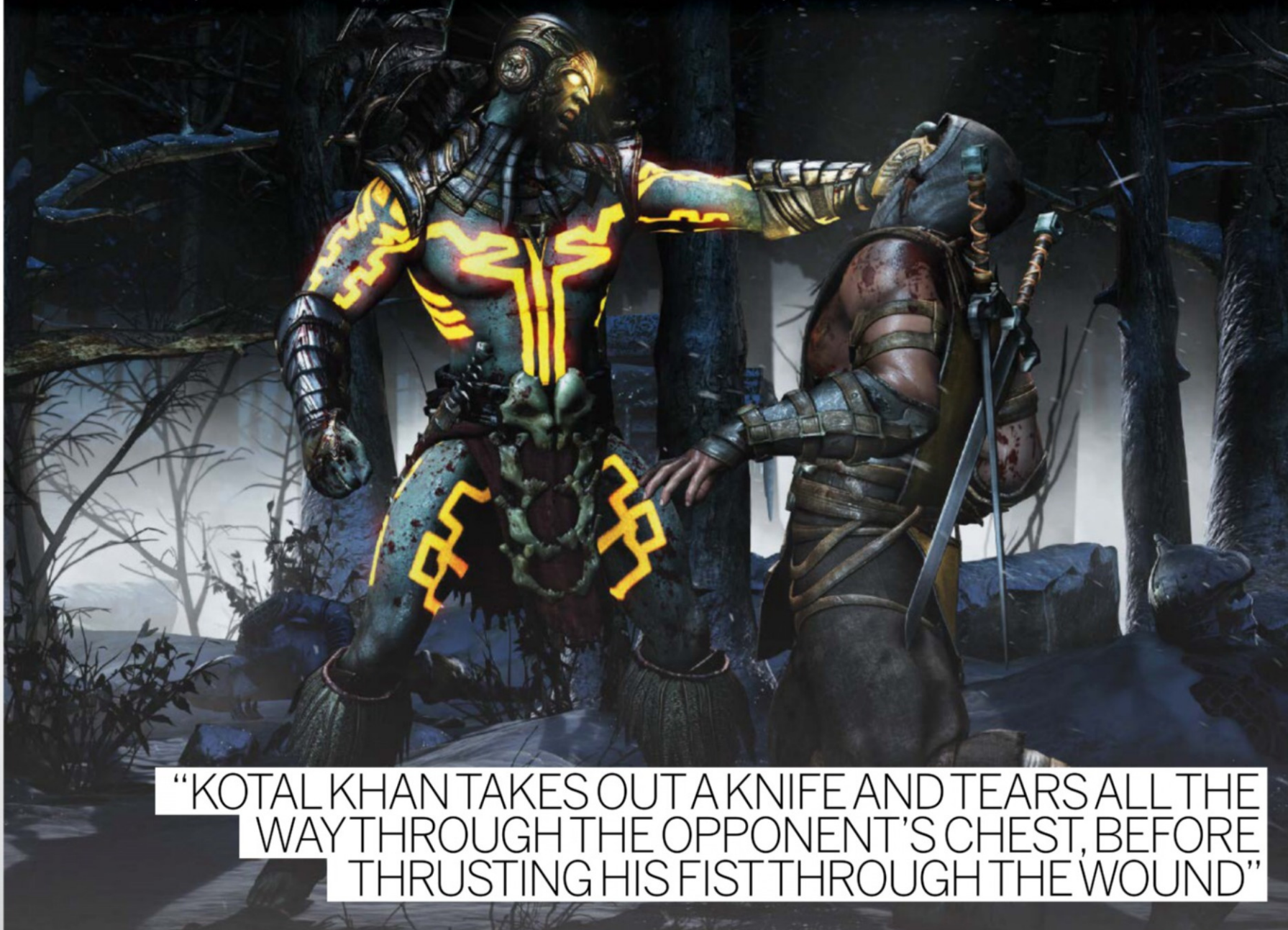
The bug queen sends out two swarms of creatures to eat away at the victim, leaving several huge wounds. She sends another swarm for the face, which devours the flesh to leave just a skull – it rolls off its torso and she stomps on it.

KOTAL KAHN

Kotal Kahn takes out a knife and tears all the way through the opponent's chest, before thrusting his arm through the wound and ripping out the heart. He then proceeds to crush the still-beating organ and drink the blood that pours out. Violence is thirsty work, after all.

FERRA/TORR

The big guy grabs the opponent's arms as the little one stabs them in the head. The tiny one then flips over the victim and slides all the way down their back, scoring them so that the big fella can easily just pull them clean in half.



"KOTAL KHAN TAKES OUT A KNIFE AND TEARS ALL THE WAY THROUGH THE OPPONENT'S CHEST, BEFORE THRUSTING HIS FIST THROUGH THE WOUND"



EARTHLOCK

FORMAT: PS4 **ETA:** Q2 2015

Old-school RPG action is order of the day here in this successful Kickstarter project, scheduled to come to PS4 some time next year. If the pretty visuals, turn-based combat and all-too-rare premise are enough to sway you, head over to the official website – you can back the game throughout development through other means and additional funds mean more stretch goals. It's like pre-ordering, but with a better game at the end if you do. Sold!



SENTRAN KAGURA: BON APPETIT!

FORMAT: VITA **ETA:** Q3 2014

Take the cast of Japan's number one busty ninja action franchise, stick them in a cooking contest, stir in some rhythm-action gameplay and you've got one of Vita's strangest games ever. If you know what's good for you, never look at the DLC costumes at work, unless you like getting fired.



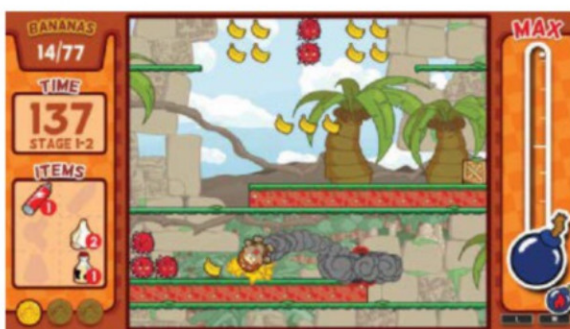
BLOOD BOWL 2

FORMAT: PS4 **ETA:** Q4 2014

The last adaptation of the Games Workshop sports-RPG didn't go down particularly well – most players didn't understand the rules and the game did a terrible job of explaining them. Hopes are higher this time out, plus both single-player and online modes sound far closer to the board game.



△×□ Crushing tackles can kill fragile players.



BABOON!

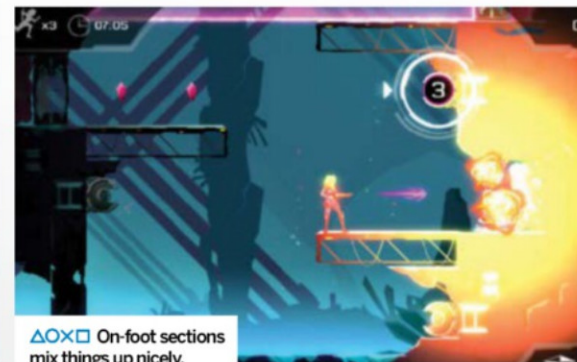
FORMAT: VITA **ETA:** Q3 2014

You probably haven't heard of *Baboon!*, but that's okay – we forgive you. To bring you up to speed, it's an action-platformer that stars a little monkey dude who repeatedly blows himself up in order to reach distant platforms and bananas. It looks a bit on the budget side but if that basic premise doesn't have you interested, you must be dead inside.

VELOCITY 2X

FORMAT: PS4, VITA **ETA:** Q3 2014

The high-octane shooter action of *Velocity Ultra* made for one of the most intense games on Vita, and this sequel promises more of that eye-melting speed. This time, though, side-scrolling areas where you can leave the ship stand to mix things up and give your poor eyes a rest.



△×□ On-foot sections mix things up nicely.

TEAM PICKS HOTLINE MIAMI 2: WRONG NUMBER



MY CHOICE IS perhaps a little more niche than most, but the success of the first game is no doubt going to work wonders for this new iteration and will garner it even more popularity. I've played *Hotline Miami* on Vita as well as PC, and I think it's the perfect fit for Sony's awesome handheld.

There's just something so compulsive and so unsettling about the game that makes me

excited for *Wrong Number*. The mixture of twitch gameplay and veiled puzzle mechanics is unique and satisfying, and it's all coated in this offensive, putrid neon haze that makes the whole concoction a delight and a luminescent nightmare at the same time. The soundtrack was incredible, too. If the sequel is more of the same, then good. Don't change a thing Dennaton – it's already perfect.

STEVE HOLMES



MAGICKA 2

FORMAT: PS4 ETA: 2015

With *Diablo III* due on PS4 any day and *Helldivers* on the way as well, it's likely that those looking for top-down co-op will be all set by the time this arrives. Still, by allowing players to combine the various elements in order to cast myriad different spells (and variants thereof), this hooded adventure will likely be worth a look.



MECH RUNNER

FORMAT: PS4, VITA ETA: Q3 2014

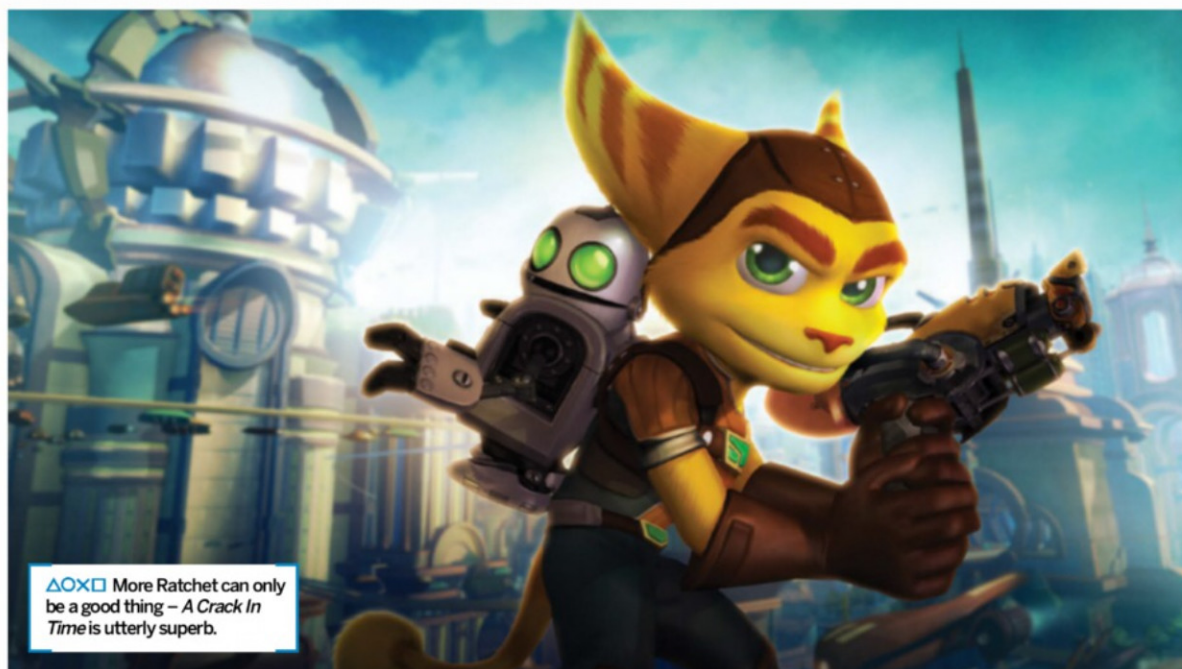
We're suckers for giant robots here on **Play**. So when someone tells us they're going to make an endless arcade action game where our mech can transform from tank to robot and back at will, we tend to just throw wallets at their faces until we're playing that game. We're still not, and frankly, we're sick of buying new wallets. Hurry up, already!



RATCHET & CLANK

FORMAT: PS4 ETA: Q1 2015

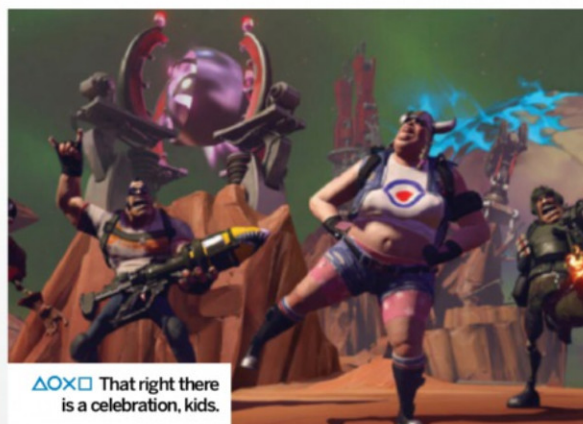
Presumably to tie in with the upcoming movie, Ratchet and Clank will return to PlayStation early next year. It sounds like it'll be a reboot of sorts but don't read anything into that – literally nobody outside of the studio cares about *Ratchet* canon and Insomniac will be free to do as it pleases just as soon as it is done dicking around with Xbox One mess, *Sunset Overdrive*.



LOADOUT

FORMAT: PS4 ETA: Q4 2014

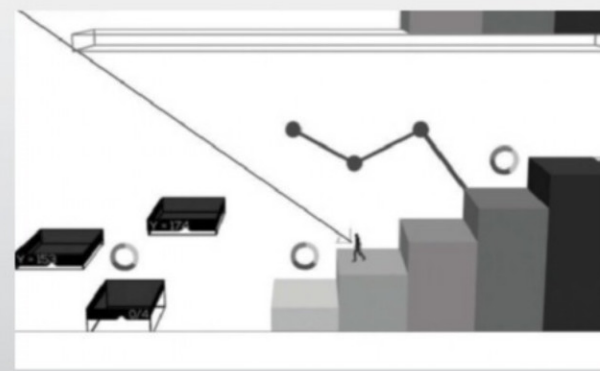
Free-to-play online shooter *Loadout* has more than a whiff of *Team Fortress* about it – in fact, it absolutely reeks of Valve's classic. But that's no bad thing, and with a customisable weapon system that offers billions of options, we're already psyched to see what kind of nonsensical death rays we can drag into battle.



METRICO

FORMAT: VITA ETA: Q3 2014

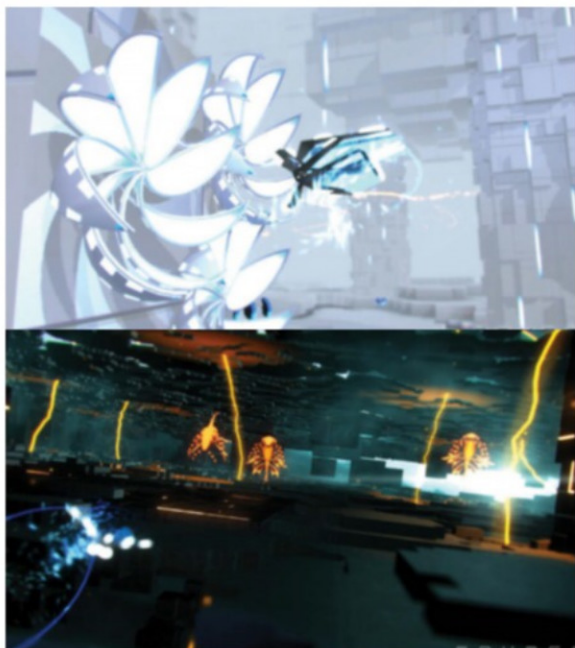
You may have noticed from other parts of the magazine, but we love a good infographic. It's like maths and charts in one (that's two of your five-a-day) and with the delayed Vita puzzle game promising clever use of the hardware in solving various visual riddles, we can't help but be intrigued. Fans of games like *Echochrome* and *Kurushi* will probably dig it too, but be warned – it features a grand total of zero guns.



SOURCE

FORMAT: PS4 **ETA:** 2015

Imagine how tough *Flower* would be if you didn't know what flowers actually looked like. That's kinda what *Source* is going for, with your 'character' having to pollinate local flora in order to secure a legacy and not lose your progress, but with the alien world making distinguishing between scenery, plants and enemies tough.



ENTWINED

FORMAT: PS4 **ETA:** OUT NOW

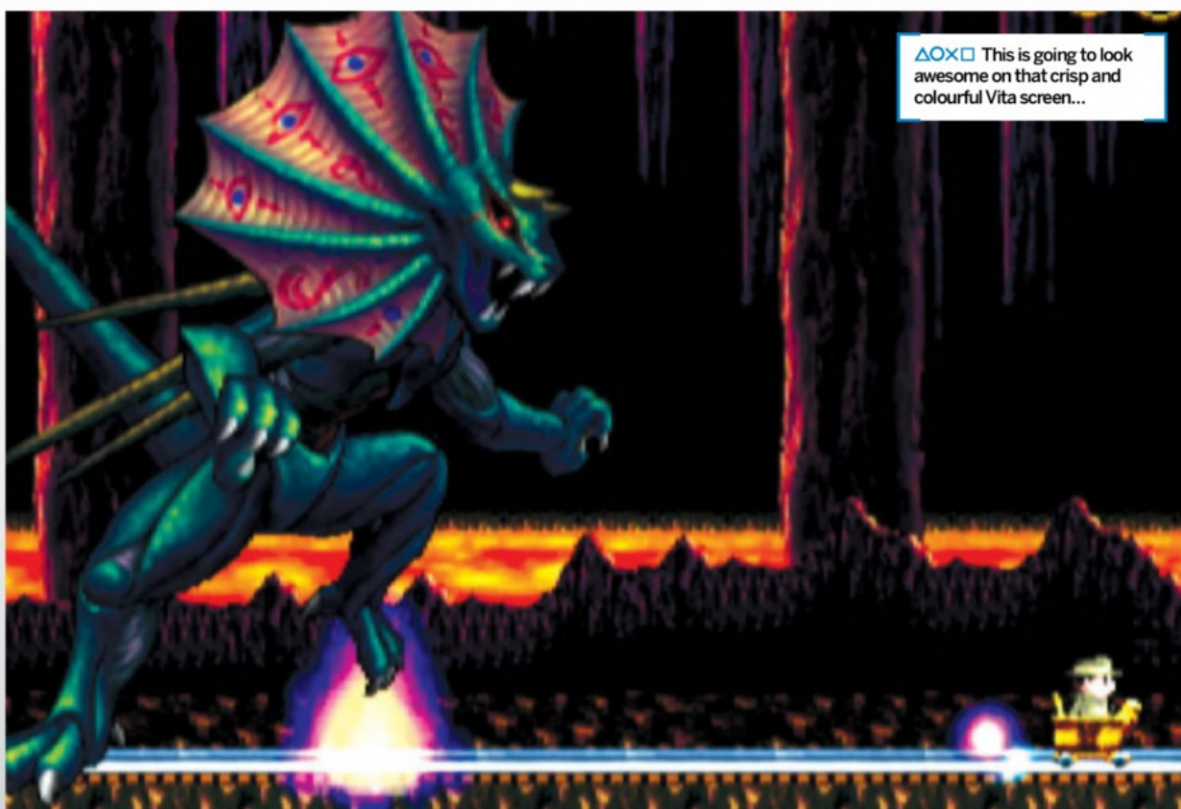
We're now so accustomed to games being announced years before launch that this student project actually caught us off-guard. Demanding dextrous use of both analog sticks, it's a fair challenge, although it's still not as good a tripped-out tunnel game as *Rez*. Then again, what is?



LA-MULANA PORTABLE

FORMAT: VITA **ETA:** DECEMBER 2014

The original game may be pushing a decade old but thanks to a new port, the Vita release stands to be the best yet as it'll have more content than any previously released version. If you thought *Spelunky* was a little unfair in its procedural generation, this is one to watch.

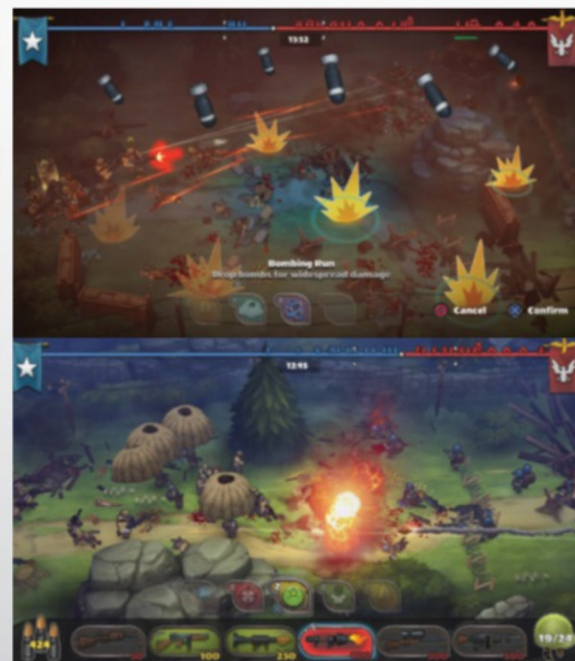


△○×□ This is going to look awesome on that crisp and colourful Vita screen...

GUNS UP!

FORMAT: PS4, PS3, VITA **ETA:** Q3 2014

Combining real-time strategy with tower defence elements has worked out pretty well for a few games in the past, but this one has two aces up its non-existent sleeve – for one, it's a free-to-play game without the usual bullshit and second, it'll feature Cross-Save across all formats. We don't hate the title quite so much after hearing that.





FOUR REASONS TO CARE ABOUT DEAD ISLAND 2

FORMAT: PS4 ETA: 2015

Not that you didn't already, right?

1. IT'S A NEW DEVELOPER

Previous developer Techland might never have been able to quite live up to the hype created by that zombie-child-chucked-through-a-window-in-a-time-warp trailer for the first *Dead Island*, but now the franchise is under new management. New developer Yager has quite a pedigree, too: its last offering was *Spec Ops: The Line*, a smartly self-aware third-person shooter that played like a six-hour critique of genre juggernauts like *COD* and *Battlefield*. After military shooters, zombies might be gaming's most ubiquitous genre – could Yager be about to do for walking corpses what it did for barging into other people's countries and shooting at them? Maybe, although the game's E3 trailer was far from sombre, documenting the infection and eventual splattering of a fraudulent gym owner.

2. IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT ZOMBIES

This being a zombie apocalypse, you'll also need to deal with the requisite army of uninfected nutters who always rock up at the end of the world. The human Raider faction adds a different dimension to the combat – smart enemies that will work together to bring down your group of survivors. But here's the fun part: human and zombie encounters aren't isolated. Outgunned or outnumbered? Why not try setting off a car alarm and let an inquisitive horde of undead even the odds for you? *Spec Ops: The Line* had some great opportunities to make its desert environment work in your favour – like shooting out windows to bury enemies in sand. If Yager can work the same magic with undead California, it could turn *Dead Island* into a much more tactical experience than its predecessors – the thinking man's zombie apocalypse.

3. IT'S A NEW LOCATION

And it's not even an island. Gone are the palm-fronded tropics of the original *Dead Island* and *Riptide* – *Dead Island 2*'s outbreak is set instead in sunny California. So why not just hop on your bike (or into your armour plated death wagon) and make a beeline for the state border? Happily, it's not that simple: in *Dead Island 2*, California has been cordoned off from the rest of the United States in a bid to control the infection, and you're one of the poor schmucks who found themselves stuck in the quarantine zone. According to Yager, *DI2*'s California won't be completely to scale, but like *Watch Dogs*' Chicago, you will be able to visit most of the state's iconic landmarks – the LA boardwalk, the Hollywood Hills and San Francisco have all been confirmed as locations you can visit for a spot of touristic zombie-bashing.

4. IT'S A MINI MMO

If four-player co-op is good, then eight-player co-op has to be twice as good, right? But where the previous two games saw all the human players working together as one, zombie-bludgeoning whole, in *Dead Island 2* things are a little more complicated. When you first boot *DI2* up, you'll be placed on a server with your friends – or, if you don't have any friends, with strangers. But how you behave from then on is up to you: do you team up to turn back the tide of dead and save humanity together? Ignore them and muddle through the apocalypse on your own? Kill them and take all their stuff? Yager hasn't explained exactly how the multiplayer features work, yet (though we've heard whispers of *Destiny*-style co-op arenas), but between AI-controlled maniacs and other players trying to murder you for pocket change, zombies sound like they're the least of your worries.



LEGEND OF RAVEN

FORMAT: VITA ETA: Q3 2014

Fighting fanatics might recognise this as PC beat-'em-up *Yatagarasu*, a low-key Japanese release from ex-*King Of Fighters* artist and world-class *SFIII* player Umezono. This enhanced release of the hardcore fighter will apparently feature commentary to give every match a tournament final vibe.



FAIRY FENCER F

FORMAT: PS3 ETA: OCTOBER 2014

Compile Heart RPGs aren't usually anything to get particularly excited about. But for this one to have enlisted the services of legendary *Final Fantasy* composer Nobuo Uematsu, it must be doing something right. Even if it sucks, it'll be worth enduring for the music alone.



EARTHNIGHT

FORMAT: PS4, VITA ETA: 2015

We were sold at 'dragons' but this fusion of endless runner, roguelike and twitch platformer mechanics now has our full attention. Battle your way along a dragon's back to reach its head and go for the kill, then skydive onto the next target and repeat the procedurally generated process. If that's not a recipe for success, we don't know what is. It's like *Jetpack Joyride* meets *Shadow Of The Colossus* – not a comparison we ever thought we'd make.



JAMESTOWN PLUS

FORMAT: PS4 ETA: Q4 2014

Aside from *Resogun*, PS4 doesn't have much in the way of 'traditional' arcade shooters. Final Form Games is looking to fix that, although this updated version of the the PC original does take a few liberties with the genre – it's less about single-credit clears and more about amazing four-player co-op moments.



GUNSHIP X

FORMAT: VITA ETA: Q3 2014

Apparently inspired by the AC-130 mission in the original *Modern Warfare*, this Vita shooter places players in the gunner's seat and lines up hordes of aliens for them to mow down. Original? Hell no. But it sure does look like quickfire fun, and we'll always welcome more of that to Vita.





WHAT MAKES THIS GAME GREAT?



Ex-*Halo* developer Bungie is bringing its talent and experience to *Destiny*.



Activision has high hopes for the franchise, pitching it as a ten-year experience.



Destiny is taking the MMO model and bending it to make it work as an FPS.



Destiny will feature a traditional FPS multiplayer mode.

ETA 9 SEPTEMBER | DEV BUNGIE | PUB ACTIVISION | TWITTER @BUNGIE

Destiny

Doesn't it feel good to give us some actual details, Bungie?



ALSO COMING
TO PS3

Bungie has everything to lose with its latest venture. The shroud of mystery enveloping *Destiny* has done its best to keep information light while maintaining hype at an all time high – a marketing strategy that's starting to collapse in on Activision. We've been desperate for concrete details on how this massively multiplayer – sorry, 'shared world' shooter will actually *function*. Sure, you'll travel the solar system with friends in tow, shoot a few aliens, collect some loot, and teabag any denizens of PSN foolish enough to step in your way. But *how* is the game actually structured? How such a simple and core facet of *Destiny* has been kept secret for so long continues to baffle, but there is no need to worry about that now, as Bungie finally steps out of the shadows with some actual information in hand.

Destiny isn't just looking to occupy your time – it wants to plant a flag in it and claim it as its own. With its huge world broken down into smaller chunks,

Destiny will look to capture your attention with worlds full of players going about their own business. That's not to say it's a free-for-all; players looking to explore won't likely intersect with those preparing to face the final showdown of a mission, nor will PvP players ever have to worry about lost souls wandering into their deathmatch looking for minerals instead of a firefight. A small degree of separation will do *Destiny* wonders.

This separation extends to *Destiny*'s mission structure, which has you split your time between five distinct activities. The most immediately appealing, as with any Bungie-developed game, will be the story missions. Featuring loose ties to the main story arc, these missions can be played solo or in a Fireteam of three, and you'll even have the option of bumping up the difficulty level should you want greater risk and greater reward.

Strikes we detailed at length in last month's cover feature but, for the uninitiated, these activities funnel three players through a gauntlet of enemies to face

a deadly boss and lucrative loot drop at the end – replayability is king here. The same goes for the Raids, six-player cooperative heavy runs through the toughest areas *Destiny* has to offer. These can take hours to tackle and feature an almighty challenge, only fit for the toughest end-game players.

We all know *Destiny* is a beautiful game with incredible art direction, and that's where the last of its activities comes into play. Explore will let Fireteams take simple jobs for the City and... well, explore! It's low intensity, and perfect for those sleepy nights when you just want to dick around with your pals, explore forgotten worlds and maybe stumble onto a world event versus an impossibly powerful foe. Call your friends; you're going to need 'em.

Josh West

DESTINY is being armed by Bungie, and it's coming this September. Check the website for more details: **WWW.DESTINYTHEGAME.COM**



COMPANY LINE

“There’s a lot of confusion here, and we haven’t done the best job ever of explaining the game or its structure.” **That’s an understatement of sorts, Bungie...**



“IT’S LOW INTENSITY, AND PERFECT FOR THOSE SLEEPY NIGHTS WHEN YOU JUST WANT TO DICK AROUND WITH YOUR PALS”

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Metal Gear Solid V: The Phantom Pain

Trying to grow without the growing pains



ALSO COMING TO PS3

WHEN YOU'RE MAKING a big open-world game, one of the key things to do is give your players a way to get about quickly. Kojima Productions is promising that *Metal Gear Solid V: The Phantom Pain* will have an enormous map, 200 times the size of the one in *Ground Zeroes*, so it has thoughtfully given you the ability to ride a horse. "So what? You can do that in *Assassin's Creed II*, you muppet," you cry in exasperation. "Tell us something new!" Well, here's something new: the horse can take a dump, right there on your screen.

It might sound like we're being facetious, but that's the kind of thing that sets Kojima Productions apart from other studios – the inclusion of small and seemingly obvious things that add an extra touch of detail and humour. *The Phantom Pain* appears to be filled with them, too.

If you've played *Ground Zeroes*, you might think that you already know what *Metal Gear Solid V* is all about in mechanical terms, but you'd be way off the mark in thinking that. For a start, one of the major mechanics in *The Phantom Pain* doesn't feature in the first part of *Metal Gear Solid V*: the return of Mother Base from *Peace Walker*. As in the PSP classic, the Fulton recovery system can be used to ship enemy soldiers to Mother Base for indoctrination, but the Fulton treatment is no longer limited to enemy combatants and their vehicles. You can send back all kinds of things, from static objects to sheep – the latter emitting a comical, bewildered bleat as it shoots off into the sky. There's that sense of humour again, and a sign that Kojima Productions is granting players a real open-world experience rather than simply a large map, by allowing a little more freedom of action. Successful Fulton recoveries award GMP, the game's currency, which you can use to upgrade Mother Base or assist you in the field.

Choosing to spend GMP on Mother Base will allow you to supply the fortress with drones and other defences, which will prove necessary as the base will periodically come under attack. The frequency of these attacks hasn't yet been established, and

this is a concern – a careful balance needs to be struck, so that defending Mother Base is enjoyable and worthwhile but not something which disrupts the flow of the game. A further upgrade since *Peace Walker* is the ability to explore Mother Base, seeing the items, wildlife and soldiers you've plucked from the field of battle – and in another of the little touches we mentioned earlier, the soldiers salute Snake as he walks by.

If you choose to use your GMP in the field, you'll be calling in airdrops from a friendly helicopter, receiving items and weapons where you need them most. Amongst the items that can be airdropped in are the series' signature cardboard boxes, an unsurprising inclusion that comes with some interesting new possibilities. As well as concealing Snake, the box is now able to act as a decoy – you can have Snake pop out of the side into a crawling position, preferably into cover, leaving the box as the last evidence of his intrusion. But that isn't as much fun as the first time you burst out of the box to silently neutralise an enemy.

If there's one concern we have about the additional funny touches right now, it's that they might clash too heavily with the story that Kojima is looking to tell. Everything we've seen so far suggests that this is going to be one of the darker entries in the series, featuring Big Boss's formation of the Diamond Dogs, his desire for revenge following the events of *Ground Zeroes* and his downfall and rechristening as Venom Snake.

We already know that the core design of *Metal Gear Solid V* is very good thanks to *Ground Zeroes*, and we know that *The Phantom Pain* has the potential to be great if it successfully expands the formula over its promised large play area. We just hope that some of the new additions don't prove too intrusive to the core principles of sneaking and storytelling.

Nick Thorpe

METAL GEAR SOLID V: THE PHANTOM PAIN is currently hiding under a box at Kojima Productions. To find out more, visit: www.konami.jp/mgs5

△×□ Here's the iconic image of *The Phantom Pain* – Snake cries out, with shrapnel embedded deeply in his skull.



△×□ Horses and other vehicles are provided to traverse the expansive environment of Afghanistan, which we haven't seen all that much of yet.



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BOX TAKEDOWN

From concealed to combat in one easy step

As we've mentioned, it's possible to silently take down an enemy while concealed in the cardboard box. Snake bursts out of the top of the box with gun drawn and ready, and his foe silently sinks to his knees with his hands behind his head, signifying surrender. It's a cool little moment for long-time fans to see, and looks pretty funny too.

WHAT MAKES THIS GAME GREAT?



The high quality stealth gameplay of *Metal Gear Solid V: Ground Zeroes* returns.



A huge open-world map, said to be 200 times bigger than that of *Ground Zeroes*.



The new incarnation of Mother Base, a base of operations for the Diamond Dogs.



New mechanics, including additional moves from the cardboard box.



"YOU CAN FULTON ALL KINDS OF THINGS, FROM STATIC OBJECTS TO SHEEP"





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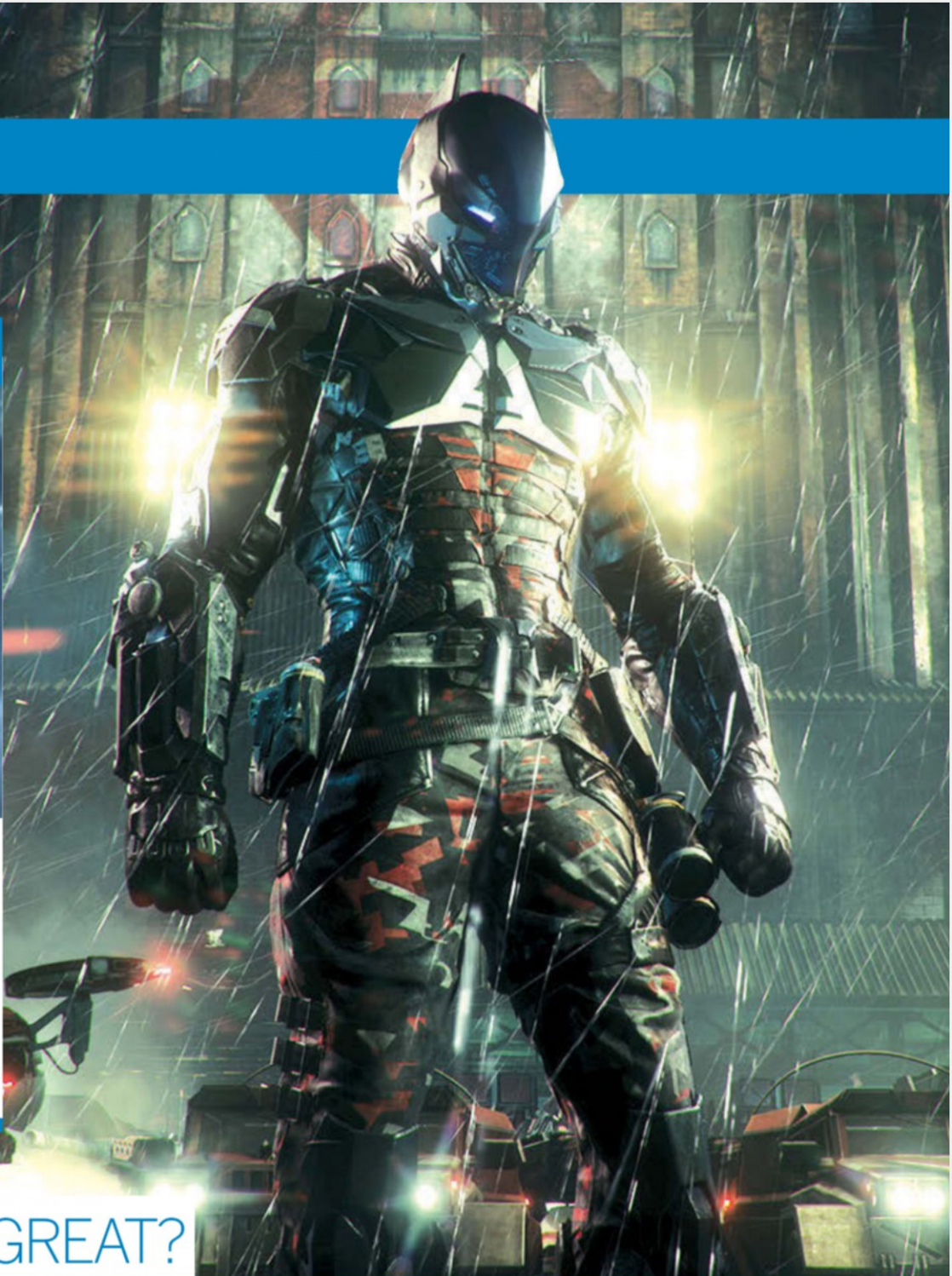


EAT MY BAT-DUST

There's street racing, and then there's street racing in the Batmobile

We're curious to see just how seriously Rocksteady is going to take the driving/racing elements of *Arkham Knight*. So much attention has been lavished on the Batmobile, you'd expect the driving mechanics to be on par with *GTA's*

and a damn sight better than *Watch Dogs'* attempt. If so, you'll be shouting about your laps around Gotham in no time, showing off to your friends with your screenshots backing you up for bragging rights.



WHAT MAKES THIS GAME GREAT?



Full control over the Batmobile should make this the definitive Batman experience.



You'll encounter a full rogues' gallery here, headed up by the Arkham Knight.



Scarecrow 'nightmare' missions are back, and are exclusive to PlayStation 4.



Arkham Knight has the benefit of observing the successes and failings of three predecessors.



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Batman: Arkham Knight

Let's go for a Knight drive...



NOLAN'S CINEMATIC BATMAN

trilogy evolved and grew with an incremental rhythm – *Batman Begins* started things off with a bang, but it was testing the waters. Like Batman games, Batman films had struggled to penetrate exactly what it was that made the Caped Crusader special – that was until Nolan and Bale came along. With *The Dark Knight*, Nolan hit upon one of the most intrinsic properties of Bats' universe: the gothic splendour of the villains. In *The Dark Knight Rises*, the iconic baddies and sense of drama were fused with aplomb, testing Bruce Wayne's moral agility whilst wracking up an apocalyptic tension that, ultimately, came to a rewarding and gratifying payoff.

Rocksteady's *Arkham* trilogy follows the formula of Nolan's films closer than you'd think. Establishing the universe in a claustrophobic and intimate madhouse, then expanding the universe to incorporate more villains, more iconic locations, more *Batman*, Rocksteady has again and again revised what it is that makes a great Batman game. With *Arkham Knight*, the developer has finally figured out how to apply the final piece of the puzzle – the Batmobile.

The Batmobile can be summoned to Bruce's location at will, wherever he is in the city – call in your bulletproof vehicle and it will be there to meet

you when you touch down on Gotham's streets at ground level. Once you glide into the vehicle, there are two modes you can select from behind the wheel – Pursuit and Battle. Pursuit is effectively your navigational and traversal option, the mode that will open up the city for you and allow you to dominate Gotham's roads or take on the Riddler with his Batmobile-specific arenas and challenges.

Battle mode is a little more left-field; a little more interesting. The Battle mode morphs the Batmobile into a vehicle that's more tank than car (think *Armored Core* meets *Transformers*), where you're given more manoeuvrability, the ability to strafe in a 360-degree field, an array of ridiculous weapons (including a Vulcan minigun and anti-tank cannon) and full hands-off control. It's an interesting direction that Rocksteady is taking the Batmobile in, not least because the entire point of Bats is that he *doesn't use a gun*. Just because he isn't pulling a traditional trigger, doesn't mean car-mounted turrets aren't guns, right? We're interested to see how and if Rocksteady justifies this newly granted firepower but we're sure it will – maybe Alfred recently stocked up on a tonne of rubber bullets or something. That said, the sheer amount of havoc you can wreak with anti-tank salvos probably can't be justified within Batman's remit.

It's fair to say the Batmobile will galvanise the power fantasy that is a *Batman: Arkham* game. Rocksteady has taken care to bear this in mind when figuring out how to utilise the vehicular weapon of mass destruction to best advantage; it won't slow if you clip a building, for example (though the building will sustain damage in your stead), and the car-tank will slice through other traffic uninhibited – this isn't *GTA*; we doubt you'll have to pay any kind of mind to pedestrians or other road users. If you saw the Batmobile speeding up on the road behind you, you'd move out of the way pretty sharpish, right?

We appreciate Warner Bros Montreal's efforts with *Origins*, but Rocksteady knows how to pull off a Batman game with authenticity and passion. *Origins* felt out of sync with the rest of the franchise, and where *The Dark Knight Rises* rounded off the film trilogy with high stakes and rich rewards, we hope the final instalment in Rocksteady's *Arkham* trilogy will follow suit because, after all, this could be the last time we see Rocksteady tackle Gotham, and the developer really deserves to go out with a bang.

Dom Peppiatt

BATMAN: ARKHAM KNIGHT is being fitted with its cape and cowl by Rocksteady Games. Check the website for more details: www.batmanarkhamknight.com

"ROCKSTEADY KNOWS HOW TO PULL OFF A BATMAN GAME WITH AUTHENTICITY AND PASSION"

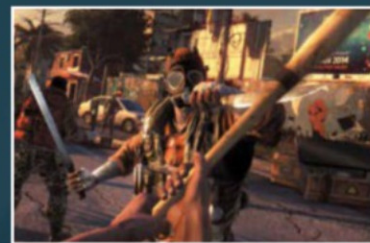
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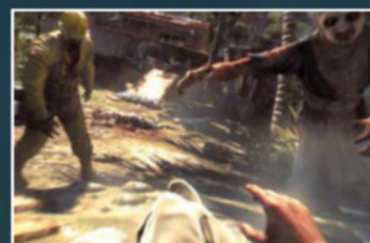
Dying Light



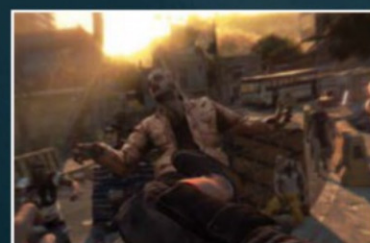
SHOULD WE GIVE ZOMBIES A REST?



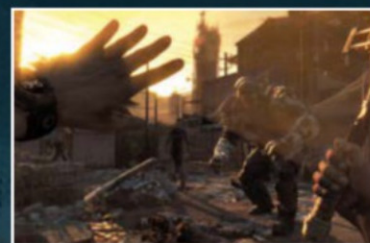
Zombies are everywhere nowadays (albeit, not in real life, thankfully), swarming all over our games, movies, books and TV shows. A good old zombie apocalypse is a fascinating concept with a ton of potential, but it can't be denied that we've seen a whole lot of it in recent years.



A premise can never truly be tired if people are still finding new things to do with it. With zombies, we seem to be rapidly approaching the point where that ends, where creators have nothing original left and things become gradually more derivative. The fact that *Dying Light* started life as a sequel is a sly indicator that it might not have a huge amount of new things to say.



Still, Techland elected to give the game a new title, deciding that the addition of free-running and other things, warranted a new name. It looks fun, don't get us wrong – it's the zombie thing that might be getting tired.



For example, why not werewolves? Vampires? Triffids? There are a whole bunch of cool monsters out there languishing on the bench while zombies continue to have all the fun. Imagine a game where you had to hide from hordes of ravenous mermen, hungry for land-dweller flesh? Doesn't get much scarier than a merman.

RUN AWAY!

Dying Light's gimmick is its mixture of zombie action and first-person free-running in a style similar to *Mirror's Edge*. As you no doubt know by this point, taking on hordes of undead head-on is never going to end well, and tactical retreat is often your best option. Luckily, your character is a post-apocalyptic ninja, able to leap, climb and traverse the roughest of urban terrain and get away with minimal trouble.

WORKING 9-5

The game features a dynamic day and night cycle. During the day, the player must search and scavenge for items to keep themselves alive while avoiding the dead and dangerous living bandits at the same time. Once night falls though, things change drastically. The zombies become far faster and more aggressive, sprinting after the player as well as jumping and climbing just as you can.

DEAD-ER ISLAND

Remember *Dead Island*, that game from Techland about surviving a zombie apocalypse? Well this is *Dying Light*, a game from Techland about... surviving a zombie apocalypse. *Dying Light* started out as a *Dead Island* sequel, but the team decided that the game was different enough to warrant its own name and franchise.

WHAT HAVE WE BECOME?

As with any good zombie story, the living pose just as much of a threat as the dead. You'll be able to craft various melee weapons to defend yourself, as well as guns and other ranged weapons if you are lucky. We are yet to see just how large a part of the game combat will play, but with such an emphasis on free-running we'd assume that this will normally take precedence over fighting your way through.

CONSTANTS AND VARIABLES

Techland is an interesting developer, as its games tend to vary wildly in quality from one to the next. The two *Dead Island* games were fun but not particularly polished, and early *Call Of Juarez* games were nothing to write home about, but the most recent instalment, *Gunslinger*, was a wonderful little gem that came out of nowhere to become one of our favourite FPS games of last year. Hopefully *Dying Light* will be one of Techland's better games, rather than falling back into the mediocre spectrum.

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HOW IT WORKS ILLUSTRATED

Issue one

HISTORY OF THE WORLD

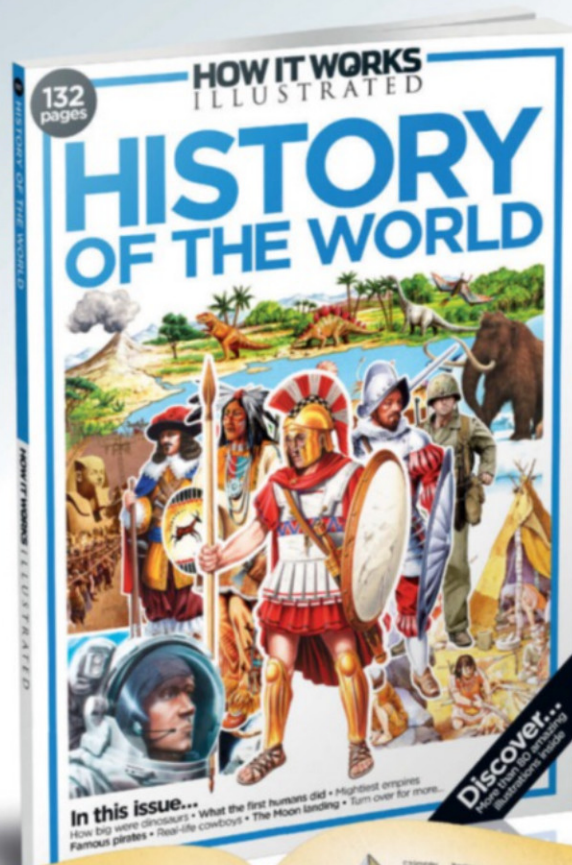
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THE GOOD OLD DAYS

Scorpion was once a ninja named Hanzo Hasashi, one of the finest warriors in the Japanese ninja clan Shirai Ryu. Despite this, he is killed by the original Sub-Zero, a ninja of the rival clan Lin Kuei. With a burning desire for revenge that persisted after death, Hanzo became a hellspawn revenant known as Scorpion.

ANATOMY OF... SCORPION

We've just seen him fighting Sub-Zero (again), but who is this mysterious, yellow-clad ninja?

DON'T HURT 'EM, HANZO

Scorpion enters the first Mortal Kombat tournament seeking vengeance against Sub-Zero, and eventually tracks him down and kills him. However, he later learns that someone called Sub-Zero is planning to enter the second tournament, and enters again to once more track him down. This new Sub-Zero is the younger brother of the first.

FRIENDS FOREVER

Scorpion repents to the new Sub-Zero and vows to serve as his guardian as atonement for killing his brother. The two had various adventures, until the 2011 *Mortal Kombat* rebooted things and set the two at odds again. Even the *Mortal Kombat X* trailer is centered around a fight between the two brightly-coloured ninjas.

GET OVER HERE

Scorpion has a bunch of weapons, the most famous being his spear-tipped chain, used to impale foes from afar before yanking them towards him to be cut into pieces. He also has multiple kunai – small swords for dismemberment – as well as the ability to summon hellfire. Throw in a bit of teleportation and the fact that *he is a ninja* and Scorpion is a force to be reckoned with.

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Mortal Kombat X



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Evolve

Unleash the Kraken



EVOLVE IS AN idea that has been swimming around in the head of Turtle Rock co-founder Chris Ashton for years. Even before his team

helped Valve give the world *Left 4 Dead*, he had the vision that would one day become *Evolve*.

"If you've ever played any games at all, you've probably played a game where there was a boss monster at the end and you fought it," Ashton said in a recent interview. "What we wanted to do with *Evolve*, was we wanted to fight that boss monster with our buddies, and then we figured out one of our buddies could even be the boss monster."

Evolve builds on the mismatched multiplayer template that *Left 4 Dead* introduced to a new generation of games, with four players controlling human hunters against a fifth who plays as the terrifying monster. We've already seen the first monster, known as the Goliath – a huge, hulking bruiser that wants nothing more than to smash your face in – and 2K has now announced the second, the Kraken, a similarly enormous Cthuluesque monstrosity that can fly around and hurl elemental-based magic at your poor team. It has less health than the Goliath, but makes up for this with better mobility and some crazy attacks. Regardless of which monster you pick, it can kick some serious ass.

That said, that isn't always strictly true. The minute-to-minute balance of the game changes as a match progresses, with the monster starting off small and relatively underpowered compared to the well-armed hunters. Other creatures litter the map, and the monster must hunt down and eat these to grow larger, entering a cocoon to level up but becoming extremely vulnerable in the process. This early stage is the hunters' best chance to score a victory, as the longer the monster lives and the larger it gets, the more the odds swing in its favour.

While the human team wins by killing the monster, the monster can succeed either by wiping out the humans or achieving another, map-specific objective like destroying a human base. It's a fascinating set of multiplayer mechanics that leads to a constantly changing sense of advantage, pace and objective.

The playable hunters fall into four classes, although multiple characters within each class



"REGARDLESS OF WHICH MONSTER YOU PICK, IT CAN KICK SOME SERIOUS ASS"

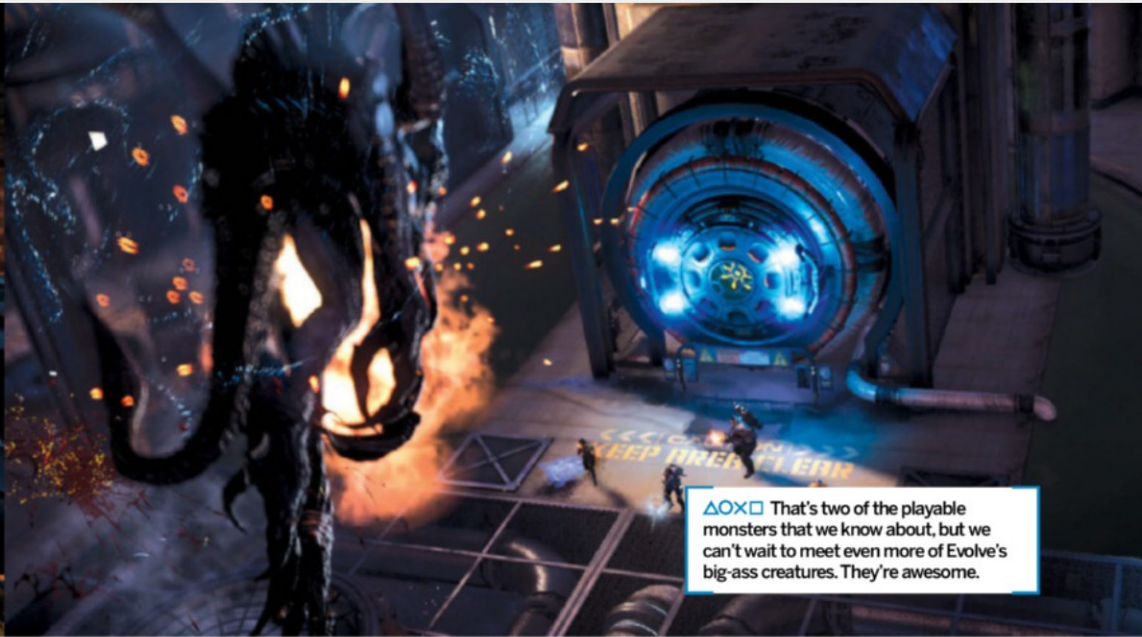
have different abilities, leading to a wide variety of ways to play. First up is your basic Assault class, favouring heavy weapons, lots of armour and a straightforward approach revolving around shooting things in the face. Trappers fulfil the true hunter archetype with snares to capture the monster and a weapon set based on long-range precision. Medic and Support are fairly self-explanatory, although dismissing them as such is selling them short. Every character within a class has different gear and as such a different play style, such as the two currently revealed medics. Val has a health gun and focuses on keeping the team alive, while Lazarus, has no direct heal capacity and is geared towards reviving players after they have been killed, helped by a useful cloaking device. Even among the same class, the two are

completely different and change the strategies of the human team and the monster.

All in all there will be 12 hunters (three for each class) and three monsters at launch, with more promised to follow afterwards. With the amount of variables in character choice, map type and the ways they all interact, *Evolve* really could fulfil that dream of never being the same experience twice. Will the core gimmick of one versus four will survive the first few months and go on to achieve years of multiplayer success? We'll see, but *Evolve* has every chance of having a long life ahead of it.

Sam Smith

EVOLVE is being ruthlessly pursued by Turtle Rock Studios. Check the website for more details: www.evolvegame.com



△×□ That's two of the playable monsters that we know about, but we can't wait to meet even more of Evolve's big-ass creatures. They're awesome.



WHAT MAKES THIS GAME GREAT?

- △ A new multiplayer shooter from the brains behind *Left 4 Dead*.
- Play as the giant boss monster and try to kill your friends.
- × Or, play as a human hunter and bring that big bastard down!
- Multiple characters allow for different matches each time.

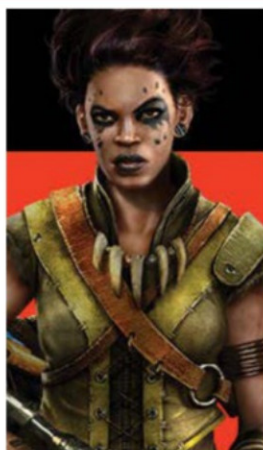
MEET THE TEAM

These are only four of the 12 characters you'll eventually be able to choose from. Not only are they different visually, they all have different weapons and unique play styles



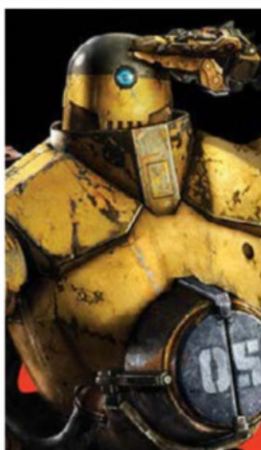
HYDE

Hyde is an assault class soldier armed with a huge flamethrower and a bullet-spitting minigun. He also has an eye patch, just in case he wasn't already enough of a badass for you. If you like heavy weaponry, Hyde is the guy to choose.



MAGGIE

Maggie is a trapper with a unique feature – her own pet. It's an alien-dog thing called Daisy, which can be a valuable assist when it comes to taking down the monster. Call it 4.5 vs 1 instead, eh? You can always count on man's best friend!



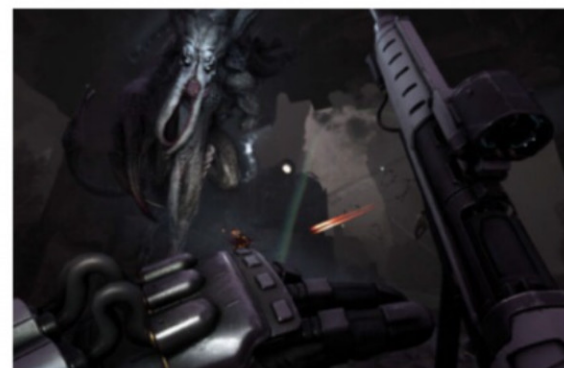
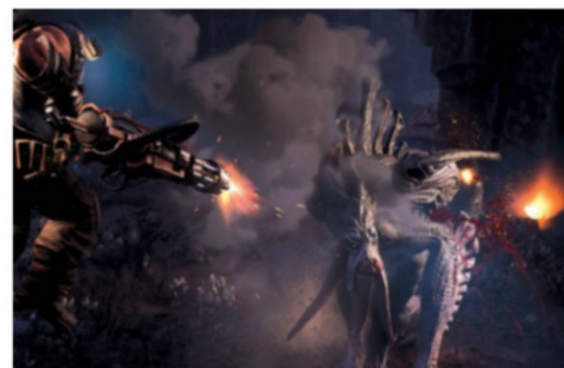
BUCKET

A support class and our favourite character yet, Bucket is a robot who can yank off his own head and fly it around the battlefield like a UAV. This lets you try and spot the monster early, so you can go kill it before it grows huge.



LAZARUS

While the first medic revealed, Val, has a medigun that directly heals teammates, Lazarus takes a slightly more obtuse approach. Anyone can revive a teammate if needs be, but only Lazarus can do it instantly with his special equipment.





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No Man's Sky

Reach for the stars



THE CENTRAL HOOK of *No Man's Sky*, the concept on which the game's appeal is predicated, is as exciting and alluring as it was when the game was initially revealed in December. The excitement that surrounds *No Man's Sky* can in no small part be attributed to how easy that concept is to grasp and how it can instantly spark the imagination, gesturing towards what seems like limitless possibilities.

That concept was again the focus of the E3 showing, in which we saw a player emerge from a cave to be presented with a vibrant landscape, the calls of the planet's wildlife reverberating as the player made their way through orange grassland to a lake surrounded with antelope-like creatures and dinosaurs.

From there, you can get in your spaceship, fly into the sky and find yourself seamlessly, without a loading screen, in space. Here, the possibilities seem endless – players can fly wherever they choose, engage in space battles or explore any planet they want. *No Man's Sky* is selling itself as a game that can offer unparalleled

freedom in a universe of incomprehensible scale and, from what we've seen, the game looks close to fulfilling that promise.

How is *No Man's Sky* able to do this? Because it's procedurally generated. In fact, it is – according to Hello Games – infinite (we'll have to wait to find out exactly what it means by that – it can't be literally infinite). Every player will start on a different planet and, as a result, will have a different experience as they begin to explore the universe. There's unquestionably something wonderful about that, about the idea that you will see things that no one has else has seen, will be the first to discover planets, caves, seas, wildlife and whatever else the game has in store. After making a new discovery, your name will be indelibly etched into the universe as the pioneer who first laid eyes on whatever it is you've just found – we think that's pretty cool.

Before we have you falling head over heels in love with the promise *No Man's Sky* is selling, however, let us put the brakes on the hype train by pointing out

there's still much we don't know. Yes, a procedurally generated infinite universe that can be explored freely sounds incredible, but will *No Man's Sky* be able to generate planets with the requisite level of variety to keep exploration interesting? We don't yet know. When we're exploring this vast universe, will we be able to hook up with other players? Is there a risk that we'll spend many boring hours drifting through the void of space trying to find someone to explore with, or to battle? Again, we don't yet know.

We do know that *No Man's Sky* will have combat, but until we play it, we don't know how mechanically sound that combat will be. After all, can a small indie studio really make a huge universe with a diverse array of planets to explore, provide interesting ways of interacting and connecting with other players, build a satisfying first-person shooter with a variety of weapons, and create a responsive and exciting space shooter? Sounds like a big ask.

Do we want to believe it can? Absolutely, because if *No Man's Sky* can be all those things – exploration

“THERE’S SOMETHING WONDERFUL ABOUT THE IDEA THAT YOU WILL SEE THINGS THAT NO ONE HAS ELSE HAS SEEN”



WHAT MAKES THIS GAME GREAT?

- △ Get in a spaceship and fly off the planet's surface into space – that's cool.
- The scale of *No Man's Sky*'s procedurally generated universe is a bit special.
- × When you discover a new planet, the game remembers who found it.
- It mixes a variety of mechanics, including combat, exploration, survival and trading.

game, space shooter, first-person shooter, survival game – and can deliver on all the systems it's hinting at – resource collection, trading, multiplayer combat – then it will not only be a phenomenal technological achievement, but an absolutely incredible and essential PS4 game.

What we will say is that *No Man's Sky* sounds too good to be true. As you're no doubt aware, when things sound too good to be true, they generally are. There's a need to be careful about going overboard with this, about building expectations that the game can never match, but by god it's difficult, because *No Man's Sky* looks so damn good. Our advice? Keep your eyes on *No Man's Sky* to see how it develops, because this game could turn out to be something very special indeed.

Paul Walker-Emig

NO MAN'S SKY is being explored by Hello Games. Check the website for more details:
www.no-mans-sky.com

INSTANT EXPERT

Five things you might not know about *No Man's Sky*

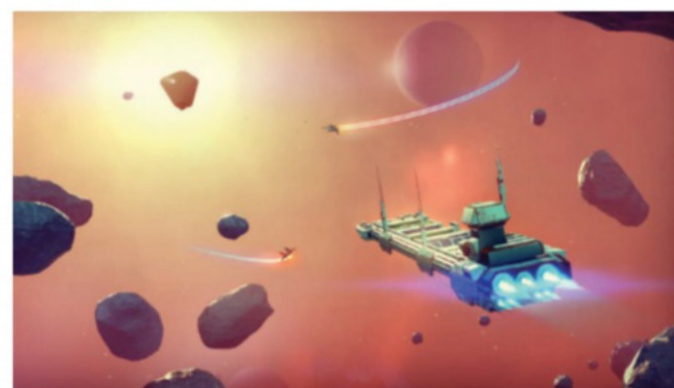
IT HAS PERMADEATH: “One mistake could see you lose everything,” *No Man's Sky*'s website reads. “In *No Man's Sky*, every victory and every defeat is permanent.” Sounds like permadeath to us.

THERE ARE SECRET ARTEFACTS TO DISCOVER: While they've not appeared in the trailers, *No Man's Sky* will have ancient artefacts to discover that “could reveal the secrets behind the universe”.

THE NO MAN'S SKY SYMBOL IS CALLED ‘THE ATLAS’: Hello Games has revealed that the *No Man's Sky* logo is called ‘The Atlas’. Though it's not clear how this relates to the story, it could be an important part of the lore.

YOU CAN BUY AND UPGRADE EQUIPMENT: Resources can be traded for new ships, suits and equipment.

IT'S NOT JUST PLANETS YOU CAN DISCOVER: Hello Games says that space won't be a void – there will be space stations, shipping lanes and freighters to find (and shoot space lasers at).

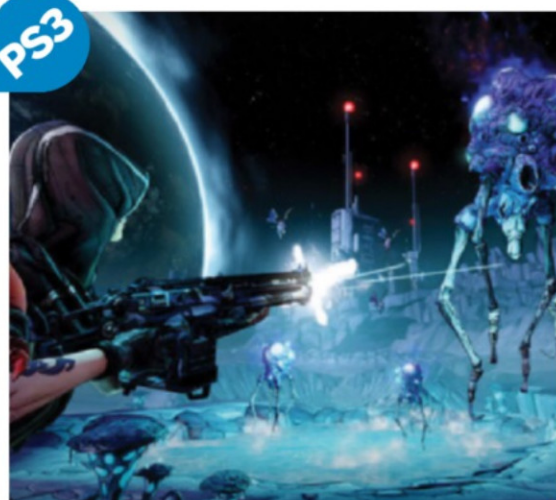


PREVIEW ROUND-UP



We'd never complain about having too many great games to play, but we can't help but wonder when we are going to find the time that each of these great titles deserves. Question is, which of this lot will be getting yours?

PS3



BORDERLANDS: THE PRE-SEQUEL

WHILE GEARBOX WORKS on what is presumably *Borderlands 3*, 2K Australia steps up to create, let's be honest, a placeholder game. However, despite its reason for existence, *Borderlands: The Pre-Sequel* could be just as great a game as the previous two, building on the same compulsive FPS/RPG template. Set between the two original games (hence pre-sequel), the story revolves around fan-favourite Handsome Jack and his descent into villainy.

RELEASE DATE: 17 OCTOBER

PS4



ALSO COMING TO: PS3

CALL OF DUTY: ADVANCED WARFARE

ANOTHER YEAR, ANOTHER *Call Of Duty: Advanced Warfare* is notable for three reasons: first, this is the first main *COD* game developed by neither Infinity Ward or Treyarch – instead, new studio Sledgehammer Games steps up to the plate. Second, it's

set in the future, allowing the developer a bit of leeway in coming up with cool new ideas, such as hordes of drones, exo-skeletal combat suits and hoverbikes. Finally, it's got Kevin Spacey in it! Spacey plays Jonathan Irons, the leader of the PMC, Atlas.

RELEASE DATE: 4 NOVEMBER

PS4



KINGDOM HEARTS III

DESPITE THE TITLE, this will actually be the eighth instalment in the *Kingdom Hearts* series. Still, the 1.5 and 2.5 HD collections contain versions of just about every game in the series to date, so even if you are starting from scratch you have an easy way to do so. Sora will once again be the protagonist, and Riku, Donald, Goofy and King Mickey are all confirmed to be returning. The game will serve as the final chapter of the Dark Seeker saga, putting to bed a story that has lasted over a decade. Excited?

RELEASE DATE: TBA

PS4



ALSO COMING TO: PS3

DRAGON AGE: INQUISITION

BIOWARE'S FANTASY TRILOGY nears its end, promising a new adventure through the world of Thedas. You'll once again make a new character and for the first time can be a Qunari along with the regular choices of human, dwarf and elf. In many ways, it's a standard BioWare RPG – lots of dialogue choices, storylines, semi-real-time combat and, yes, amusing sex scenes where not-realistic-enough character models rub their faces into each other.

RELEASE DATE: 10 OCTOBER

PS4



PLANETSIDE 2

WE STILL DON'T have a release date for *PlanetSide 2*, despite the fact it came out on PC in 2012. *PlanetSide 2* is an MMOFPS, with a huge war being waged between three factions across an entire planet. The action never stops, with various fronts always being contested. Battles can range from small skirmishes to huge campaigns with thousands of players, and it all happens naturally. Add in loads of vehicles and you have a free-to-play, sci-fi *Battlefield* on an enormous scale. Yes please.

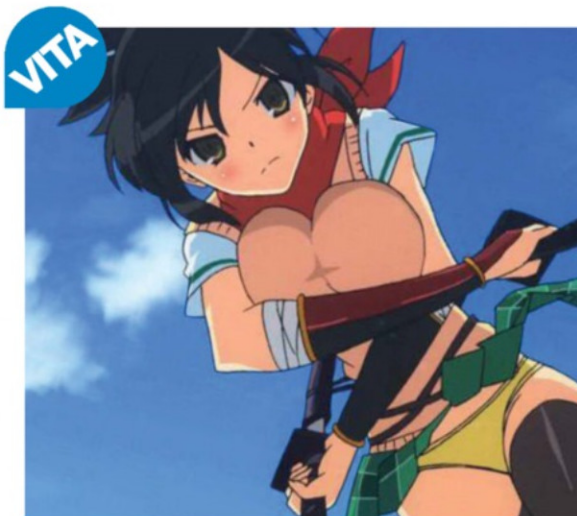
RELEASE DATE: TBA



PERSONA 4 ULTIMAX

ARC SYSTEM WORKS has been busy, with three new fighting games in a 12-month span (*Blazblue*, *Guilty Gear* and *Persona*). This is the sequel to the excellent *Persona 4 Arena*. A bunch of new characters have been added so the roster now includes almost every main player from *Persona 3* and *4*, as well as a new original character and alternate versions of everyone with differences in play style. It's a great fighting game with beautiful graphics and a quality cast.

RELEASE DATE: 30 SEPTEMBER (US)



SENTRAN KAGURA SHINOVI VERSUS

THE FIRST SENRAN *Kagura* on 3DS did well in the West, so its Vita sequel follows – only to the US for now, but we expect a Europe release will follow shortly. *Senran Kagura* is a bit of an interesting one to explain to new players – it revolves around schools of teenage female ninjas, who all just happen to, entirely coincidentally, have huge breasts and wear clothes that get destroyed quite easily. It's not pornographic, but it's definitely a bit risqué.

RELEASE DATE: 30 SEPTEMBER (US)



FINAL FANTASY XV

CONSPICUOUSLY ABSENT FROM Square's E3 lineup, *Final Fantasy XV* has clearly got a ways still to go before release. That's fine with us: a game this big and beautiful obviously needs a lot of time to be the best it can be. As good as it looks, we can't help but wonder when we think back to *Final Fantasy XIII* – a game that, before release, looked similarly great. Still, that was some time ago now, and Square seems to be actively learning from its mistakes and trying new things, as we saw in the two *FFXIII* sequels.

RELEASE DATE: 2015

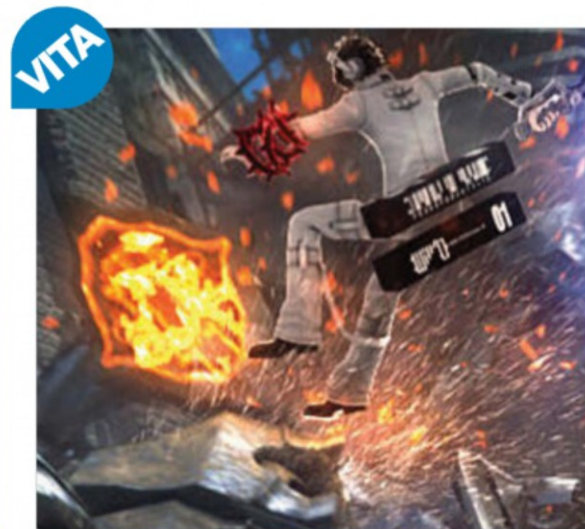


PERSONA 5

A NEW PS3 exclusive coming out in 2015? We know it's a bit crazy, but the *Persona* series has always seemed to be a generation behind – *Persona 4* didn't come out on PS2 until 2008. That game was so huge that it spawned a number of spin-offs that still continue today. There isn't much info yet, but the holy trinity of the *Persona* team – director Katsura Hashino, character designer Shigenori Soejima and composer Shoji Meguro – are all returning to reprise their roles, which is great news for series fans.

RELEASE DATE: 2015

The only thing we've seen so far is a brief teaser trailer that shows no gameplay or character details, but there are a few details we can draw from it. Just as the signature colour of *Persona 3* was blue and *4* was yellow, *5*'s will clearly be red. The story seems to revolve around freeing yourself from the shackles of everyday society, with the tagline "You are a slave. Want emancipation?" The game will continue with the high school setting that the series is known for and is so popular in Japan.



FREEDOM WARS

ARGUABLY THE MOST interesting *Monster Hunter* clone on the horizon, *Freedom Wars* could be the best bet for fans of the franchise wishing that *Monster Hunter 4* was coming out on Vita. Set in the far future, overpopulation of the Earth is a huge problem, and as such criminals are sentenced on arrest, whether guilty or not. These criminals live in enormous prison cities and are tasked with killing giant monsters to reduce their sentences, which often last hundreds of thousands of years.

RELEASE DATE: Q4 2014

PS4



ALSO COMING TO: PS3

GUILTY GEAR XRD –SIGN–

WE AREN'T THE types to judge games only on their graphics here at **Play**, but it can't be denied that looking nice always helps. No other game has aped the 2D anime look with 3D models and cel-shading better, and the transitions from a 2D view to 3D panoramas and back again mid-fight is breathtaking. Plus, of course, it's a new *Guilty Gear*! We've been waiting a decade for this, and we can't wait to throw down again.

RELEASE DATE: Q4 2014 (US)

The console version promises at least one new character as well as a full story mode in the vein of *BlazBlue* and *Persona 4 Arena*. While *Guilty Gear* is known for being difficult for newcomers to break into, creator and director Daisuke Ishiwatari has said he wants to make this instalment a bit more accessible. Still, hardcore fans shouldn't worry – even with a bit more accessibility, *Guilty Gear* is never going to reach *Street Fighter IV* levels of simplicity.

PS4



THE ORDER: 1886

READY AT DAWN is best known for the excellent *God Of War* games on PSP, spin-offs far better than they had any right to be considering the tiny console they were running on. This is the first time the team has developed an original title, and the pressure is on to deliver a big-budget PS4

RELEASE DATE: 20 FEBRUARY 2015

exclusive. Set in a strange steampunk alternate history 1886, a war between humans and beastmen that has raged for centuries has led to a wildly different Victorian London full of magic, crazy technology and awesome guns. The demo we saw recently was very exciting, and we can't wait for more.

PS4



ASSASSIN'S CREED: UNITY

WATCH DOGS MIGHT have taken the pressure off a bit, but *Assassin's Creed* is still arguably Ubisoft's key franchise. This time, our story is set in Paris during the French Revolution. It's an interesting setting, but raises a question: the best part of *Assassin's Creed IV* was being a pirate, and now that's gone, will we be taking a step back to the disappointing style of *ACIII*? Hopefully not, but the likely lack of sailing really is a shame.

RELEASE DATE: 28 OCTOBER

PS3



NARUTO SHIPPUDEN: ULTIMATE NINJA STORM REVOLUTION

WE'VE HAD A new *Naruto* game every year for a while, but the appeal hasn't worn off for us just yet. *UNS Revolution* will be the most complete package to date, with 118 playable characters covering just about everyone from the manga, no matter how obscure. There's also an entirely new character in... Mecha Naruto, but he looks rubbish.

RELEASE DATE: SEPTEMBER

PS4



LORDS OF THE FALLEN

NOBODY MENTION DARK Souls! It can't be denied how much *Lords Of The Fallen* resembles From Software's RPGs, from the difficulty to the way combat, blocking and dodging works. Still, being inspired by one of our favourite games isn't a huge problem. That said, the game doesn't have much pedigree behind it, coming from Deck13 and CI Games, neither known for its quality. We'd really like this one to be good, as more *Dark Souls* is never a bad thing, whether it's called *Dark Souls* or not.

RELEASE DATE: Q3 2014



TALES OF XILLIA 2

ONLY A YEAR and a half after it came out in Japan, the English-speaking world finally gets *Tales Of Xillia 2*. *Tales* has long been a big deal in Japan, with its own fan expo and millions of sales, but the series is slowly gaining strength in the West as well. Once *Xillia 2* is out, we'll actually be up to date with Japan as far as mainline entries in the series go. Set a year after the first *Xillia*, the sequel follows a new main character in an original story, although we recommend playing the first to begin with anyway.

RELEASE DATE: 22 AUGUST



THE WITCHER 3: WILD HUNT

WE AREN'T THE types to get too hyped up by a trailer here – after all, they are only going to show you the best bits. Even so, the most recent *Wild Hunt* trailer blew our tiny minds with a combination of incredible graphics, sweet action and an enormous, varied open world. Promising the scope of *Skyrim* with the storytelling that only CDPR seems to really know how to pull off, *Wild Hunt* is one of our most anticipated games.

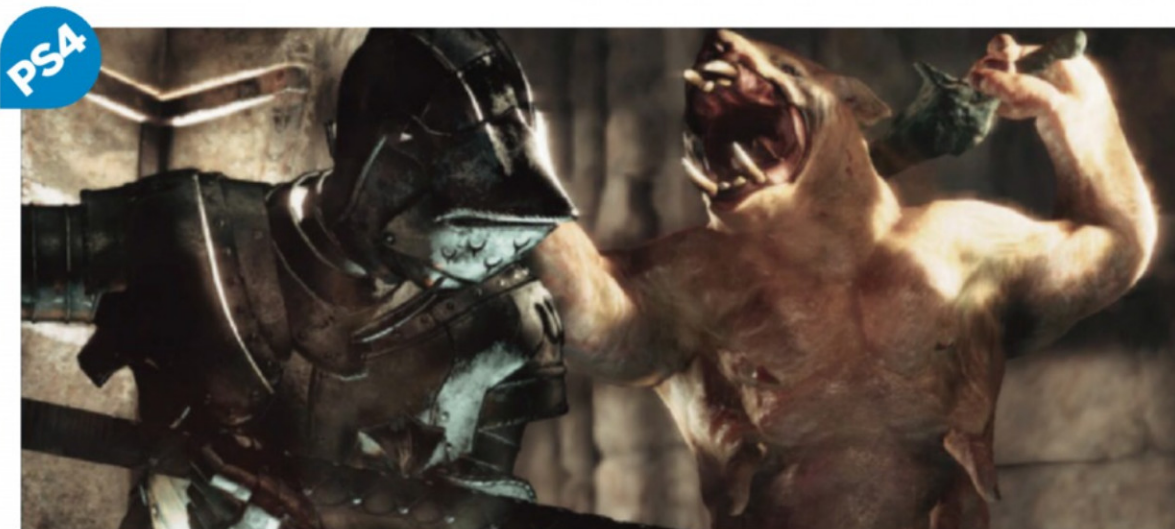
RELEASE DATE: 24 FEBRUARY 2015



ALIEN: ISOLATION

WE'VE TAKEN TO naming the huge Xenomorph that stalks you in *Alien: Isolation* by the name of Allen, because we can. You already know that you can't kill Allen, and must simply flee from he/she/it as best you can, but Sega recently revealed that it isn't just the two of you stuck out in the dark reaches of space. Crazy human survivors and hostile androids will also try to kill you, and while you can defend yourself to an extent, this will never be a combat game. Hiding and escaping is always your best option.

RELEASE DATE: 10 OCTOBER



DEEP DOWN

CONSOLE EXCLUSIVES FROM third-party publishers are increasingly rare in this age of extremely expensive development cycles, but *Deep Down* is one of the rare few. A PS4 exclusive from Capcom, *Deep Down* is a free-to-play dungeon crawler that seems to mix elements of *Dark Souls* and *Assassin's Creed*. Players will begin in 2094 New York, but by touching magical artefacts can view the memories stored within, going back and playing through these past events.

RELEASE DATE: TBA

These seem to consist mainly of trawling through dank dungeons and defending yourself from the fantasy nasties that lie within, from trolls to enormous dragons. The tone is dark and tinged with horror, showing that clear *Dark Souls* influence that runs through so many games these days. Developed on Capcom's new Panta Rhei engine, it looks fantastic, with more particle and lighting effects than we know what to do with, and some suitably monstrous creature designs.



DRIVECLUB

DRIVECLUB HAS COME leaps and bounds since we saw it last year, where it looked like a generic racer with nothing to set it apart from the pack. The extra 12 months of development have clearly helped, with improvements like the new weather system adding some much-needed atmosphere. Everything just feels that little bit tighter, more legitimate and, crucially, more fun. You'll still get a free version of *Driveclub* on PS Plus as soon as it's out, so we'll all be playing it in a few months.

RELEASE DATE: 10 OCTOBER



PS4 EVOLUTION

How your favourite games are better on PS4

BEAT-'EM-UPS

It might not seem like it, but there's crazy potential for the one-on-one fighting game to flourish on PS4. Luke Albigés takes a look at what the future could hold for the genre...

Is there any purer form of competition than pitting two people against one another and having them beat the crap out of one another until one can't stand up any more? No, no there is not. As such, it's no surprise that this basic concept was picked up by developers so early in gaming's formative years. Early arcade games like *Heavyweight Champ*, *Karate Champ* and *Yie Ar Kung-Fu* all did their bit in setting out the individual elements that would go on to be central to the genre – special moves, life bars, various characters and stages – but it wasn't until 1987's *Street Fighter* that all of these came together for the first time. And four years later, Capcom struck gold with the vastly improved *Street Fighter II*, the game that would influence and inform every single fighting game that followed.

Since then, technological improvements have allowed the genre to branch out in a number of different ways. While modern 2D fighters don't differ all that much from Capcom's seminal title, they've been joined by 3D fighting games, arena-based brawlers, first-person fighters and countless variants on all of those themes and more. The pool only stands to grow larger too, with the

indie uprising already serving up interesting takes on the genre such as *Nidhogg* and *Gang Beasts* and more innovative fighters sure to follow.

In terms of traditional 2D fighters, the simple truth is that there's not a great deal more in terms of mechanics that can be born from more powerful technology. What we will see, though, is a huge leap in visual fidelity. Obvious perhaps, but what a difference it makes – *Mortal Kombat X*'s Fatalities are even more vile when you can make out every single organ in your opponent's ravaged corpse, while *Guilty Gear Xrd*'s stunning visuals are as close as we've seen to 3D models matching hand-drawn art, to the point where you'd swear the game used *BlazBlue*-style HD sprites until the camera pulls in and pans around for super animations.

Elsewhere, it's likely that we'll see huge leaps forward in terms of online options, especially when you consider how far we came in this regard in the space of the last generation alone. Even though online play dates as far back as the SNES, *Virtua Fighter 5* on PS3 still shipped without an online component, while *Marvel Vs Capcom 3* managed to offer lobby support where waiting players could only watch the health bars of those in action rather than the actual fight. Compare that to late PS3 titles like *BlazBlue: Chrono Phantasma* (which has its own virtual arcade to explore) or *Injustice* (offering full lobby support as well as the opportunity to bet on and discuss matches in action) and you'll see what we mean, and it's only going to get better. Games like *Dark Souls* and *Watch Dogs* have come up with



5 THINGS BEAT-'EM-UPS NEED



PRECISION

Fighting games are so reliant on this in all aspects, from reading and responding to player inputs to ensuring hit boxes on characters perfectly reflect their current state at all times.



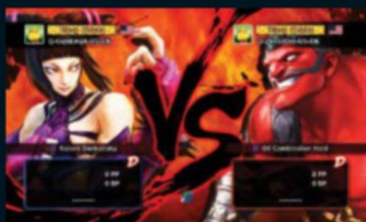
VARIETY

The important thing isn't the number of fighters, rather how differently they all play. Grapplers, rushdown, zoners, charge characters... a good fighting game covers all bases.



TRAINING

While there are plenty of sites that offer tier lists and frame data for new fighters, there's no reason this info can't be offered in-game, and more and more developers are doing just that.



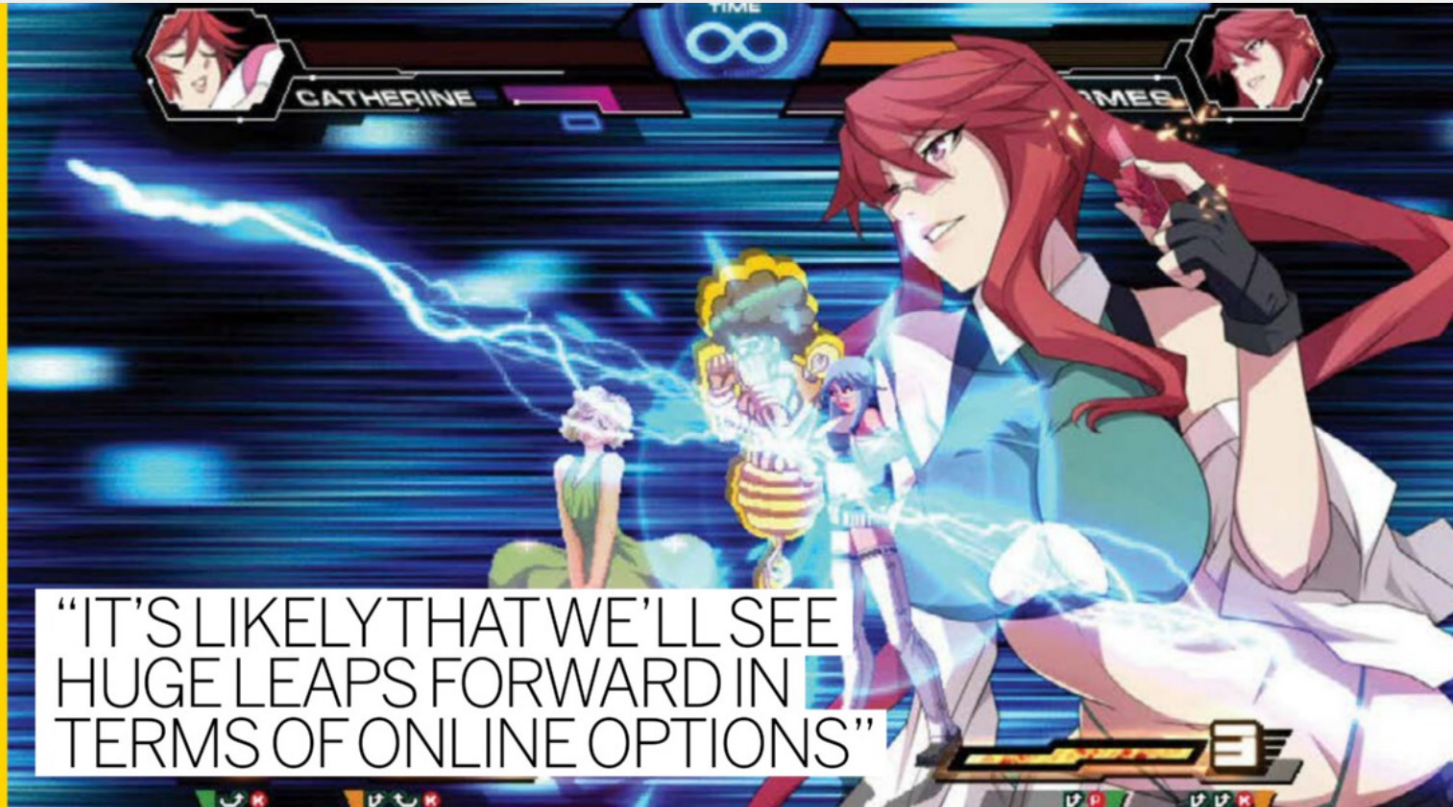
ONLINE

Few fighting games have been able to nail AI that fights like a real player, so live competition is important. Since you won't always have a challenger in the room, online options are key to longevity.



60FPS

When these games measure everything in frames, this is a no-brainer – dropped frames or variable frame rates make things like links, parries and frame traps impossible to judge accurately.



"IT'S LIKELY THAT WE'LL SEE HUGE LEAPS FORWARD IN TERMS OF ONLINE OPTIONS"

ways of merging single-player and competitive play, and there's no reason the same couldn't work here, replacing an arcade mode opponent with a real player without warning, for instance. Even interactive streaming could come to play a part and while outside interference doesn't really mesh with the natural purity of the genre, having to deal with on-the-fly buffs and nerfs dished out by viewers would certainly showcase how good a player is at thinking on their feet and reacting to different situations.

For those unable or unwilling to take the fight online, it's possible that we could start to see improvements in AI based on the performance of real players. *Tekken 5* on PSP had an awesome ghost system that would build AI fighters based on the performance of the best players, while *MVC3* featured downloadable ghosts of famous players to square off against. Neither really felt like a true replacement for playing a real human but with the power and connectivity of PS4, this could be taken to the next level. Fighters that think like actual players, each with their own play styles, traits and habits acting and reacting accurately all the way down to simulating fudged inputs or mistakes... it's the next level in fighting game AI that we're desperate to see, not least because it would give developers a reason to offer more interesting solo modes to their games.

Few games have married decent AI with solid single-player options particularly well, but those that have come close offer a fantastic glimpse of the future. Trying to find and beat every opponent in every arcade in *VF5*, for example, or wading through a Weapon Master mode in *SoulCalibur* with all kinds of new trials and weapons along the way proved to be great fun and if AI can be improved, this kind of in-depth solo mode should become as important to a new fighter as offering online play and a decent training mode.

The Share button could stand to mix things up nicely too. In an era where gamers are keen to

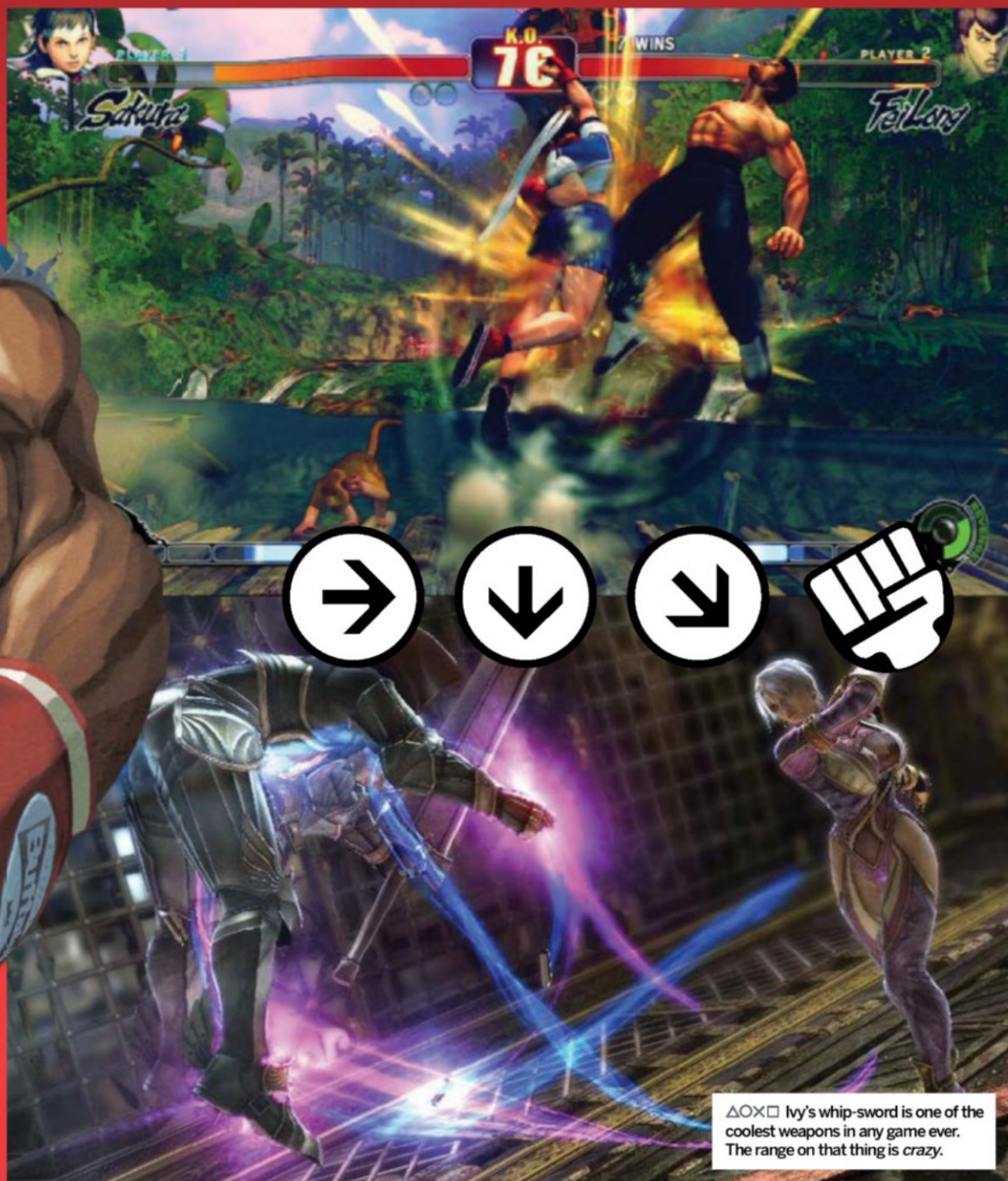


FEATURE FIGHTING: BEAT-'EM-UPS

GAME CHANGER:
STREET FIGHTER IV

It's fitting that the game that single-handedly gave life to the beat-'em-up genre should also be the one to bring it back from the dead. Polygons would be the downfall of the traditional 2D fighter, with rising stars like *Virtua Fighter* and *Tekken* ruling the late Nineties – these more technologically impressive games made 2D fighters seem outdated and even releasing *The Best Fighting Game Ever* (that'd be *Street Fighter III: 3rd Strike*) couldn't win back the 3D crowd for Capcom.

Almost a decade later, the time was right for a comeback. With a return to the popular cast of *Street Fighter II* (*SFIII* and the *Alpha* games focused on new characters), 3D fighters on a 2D plane, a flashy comeback mechanic and simpler execution to add accessibility, it was an instant hit. Five versions later, it's still on top but more importantly, it opened the floodgates and gave countless other excellent 2D fighters an audience. So yeah, thanks for that, Capcom. But seriously, where's Q?



△○×□ Ivy's whip-sword is one of the coolest weapons in any game ever. The range on that thing is crazy.

share their finest performances with the world and show off their mastery of complex gameplay systems, we could see a return to a more technical kind of fighter – the kind Capcom intentionally distanced itself from with *Street Fighter IV* in order to attract the mainstream crowd. *SFIII*'s Parry mechanic, for instance, is one of the best risk/reward mechanics in all of

of fighter, so we hope *Guilty Gear* and its 928 different kinds of cancels will be able to pique the interest of new players when experts share their amazing ways of using and abusing the game's mechanics for combo showcase videos and awesome match performances.

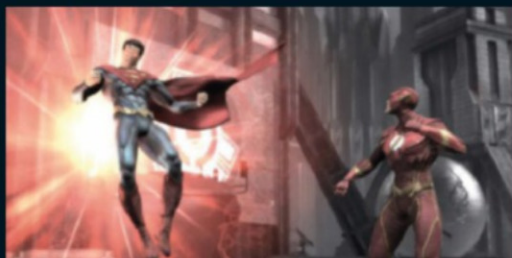
While VR tech can add nothing to traditional fighting games (if anything, it can only detract and add unwanted latency), it could be that *Morpheus* leads to a new breed of first-person fighting games, with the PlayStation

“MORPHEUS COULD LEAD TO A NEW BREED OF FIRST-PERSON FIGHTING GAMES”

gaming and you only need to look at how much people enjoy watching things like *Evo Moment #37* (where Daigo parries an entire super attack with no life left, only to respond with one of his own and win the match as the crowd goes nuts) to see how much exposure a game could get in the modern market by including so technical a feature. *BlazBlue*'s success shows that there's definitely still an audience for a deeper kind

Camera, Move and the headset coming together to put you right in the fight. Motion-controlled beat-'em-ups aren't exactly off to the best of starts – *Fighter Within* is famously the worst game on Xbox One – but that doesn't mean it's something that lacks potential. Seeing a fist come flying at your face only to sway back realistically and land a flurry of your own could be really cool, although the lack of feedback is always going to

PS3 INSPIRATION



INJUSTICE FOR ALL

While online and versus play should usually be the focus, *Injustice* showcases just how much fun can still be had with single-player modes – a daft story to follow plus loads of challenges and modes to throw yourself into back up the competitive options brilliantly here.



A HIGHER CALIBUR

SoulCalibur is the only game to offer a true character creation tool in today's fighting market. We'd love to see this taken even further on PS4 and while it can be tricky to develop and balance, the creative options such a suite affords players must be worth it.



GET HYPE

No fighter has more going on than *Marvel Vs Capcom 3*, which managed to hold steady no matter how much nonsense was going on on-screen. Just imagine how hectic things could get on PS4 – it won't work for every fighter, but for crossover stuff it's an exciting prospect.



hurt something like this. It'll be no replacement for the technicality and precision of a pure fighting game, sure, but this generation has the tools to get closer to full immersion than ever before, even if it seems unlikely that it'll be anything more than an interesting gimmick for at least a decade yet. And even when the tech has caught up with the concept, the full setup will likely be prohibitively expensive for all bar the richest gamers.

A far more drastic change is happening right now at the other end of the cost spectrum, where some of the biggest names in the business are available for free. *Dead Or Alive*, *SoulCalibur* and *Tekken* all already have their own free-to-play spin-offs on PSN and it's likely that more will follow suit on PS4. The free-to-play model is an interesting one, playing on the fact that while just a small percentage of gamers tend to actually spend money on the game, those who do generally spend a lot. Games like *SoulCalibur: Lost Swords* don't concern us too much as the single-player-only gameplay means that while elements of pay-to-win design do creep in, you're only ever beating

up the computer. It's Capcom's recent revelation that microtransactions will probably be a part of *Street Fighter V* that bothers us – we're fine with paying for extra stages and costumes but giving weak players a chance to buy wins against more skilled ones with paid advantages is worrying. *Dead Or Alive* does it far better, offering a bare-bones suite with a few characters and stages, with the opportunity to pay to add the ones you want or upgrade to the full game. More of that, please – it makes far more sense in such a competitive genre, especially if there's some way to test out characters before you buy them.

It might seem like a basic genre and one that has already hit the ceiling of what can be achieved in many respects, but it should be clear after reading all these words that that's far from the case. There's just as much room for fighters to grow and evolve as there is for any other genre and with *Guilty Gear* and *Mortal Kombat* looming large on the horizon as the first of the next wave of fighters ready to shake things up, it's probably time to start thinking about picking up a PS4 arcade stick...





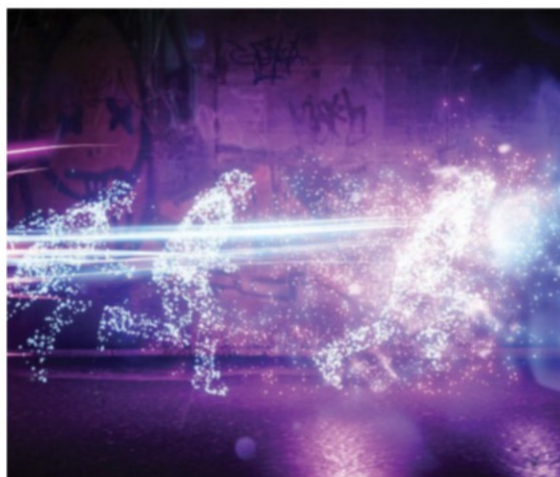
TOP TEN SUPERHERO GAMES

SUPERHERO MOVIES ARE ALL THE RAGE NOWADAYS, BUT COSTUMED CRUSADERS HAVE BEEN REPRESENTED WELL IN VIDEOGAMES SINCE DAY ONE. HERE ARE TEN OF THE BEST (THAT YOU CAN PLAY ON A PLAYSTATION CONSOLE, OF COURSE)



SPIDER-MAN 2: THE VIDEO GAME (2004)

EVEN NOW, TEN years later, no game has come as close to capturing the joy of swinging around New York City as 2004's *Spider-Man 2*. Arguably the best film adaptation in years, *Spider-Man 2* featured an open world that players could explore at their leisure. While the story, combat and graphics were all merely average, the swinging mechanics were as close to perfect as we've ever come, each web line anchoring to a real point in the world for a feeling of place and realism. Simply swinging about the world was the most fun to be had in *Spider-Man 2*, and it's still a joy to this day.



INFAMOUS: SECOND SON

THE INFAMOUS SERIES arguably offers the best superhero experience in a game not involved with Marvel or DC. *Second Son* is the best yet, with a huge open world to explore and a ton of cool powers that make doing so a breeze. Delsin Rowe might be an annoying whiner with a silly name, but the dude has some awesome powers, from shooting super-heated smoke from his hands to running incredibly fast via the power of neon. *Second Son* is also one of the best looking games on PS4 to date, a beautiful recreation of a near-future Seattle with loads to see and do.



MARVEL VS CAPCOM 2

ONE OF THE best fighting games of all time is also one of the best superhero games ever made, with an enormous roster of 52 characters, half taken straight from the pages of various Marvel comics. There are a rather large number of X-Men, thanks partially to the franchise's popularity at the time and the *MVC* series being a follow-up to the *X-Men* fighting games. Still, a large number of other superheroes get a chance to shine, all with signature attacks that make them feel like they've been taken straight from the comics. It's a wonderful game that thousands still play today.



DC UNIVERSE ONLINE

THE BEST FREE-TO-PLAY MMO on PS4 is a fascinating leap into the DC universe. Heavily inspired by the various DC animated series, this is a cartoony, fun take on a genre often bogged down in angst in modern times. Create your very own hero or villain, choose from a large variety of cool powers and fight alongside classic characters as you take down or team up with villains like Gorilla Grodd and Brainiac. Still supported with regular content updates, *DC Universe Online* is both an excellent example of a console MMO and a great superhero game.



X-MEN

THE ARCADE CLASSIC responsible for the famous lines "I am Magneto, master of magnet!" and "Welcome to die!", Capcom's 1992 take on X-Men is a side-scrolling beat-'em-up that remains a favourite for fans of the genre to this day. Recently re-released on PSN, players control one of six mutants as they walk from left to right and take down Magneto and his hordes of evil henchmen. Older fans might remember the enormous six-player arcade cabinets that were a sight to behold, using two monitors to make the action as big as possible.



SAINTS ROW IV

ONLY ONE GAME lets you be both a superhero and the president of the United States of America, and that game is *Saints Row IV*. Playing the first *Saints Row* back in the day, a mediocre *GTA* clone, you'd be forgiven for never expecting anything quite like this. With a plot that revolves around stopping an alien invasion, players control their gang leader turned president/superhero and kick a whole lot of ass while listening to a phenomenal soundtrack. No other game on this list has Rowdy Roddy Piper in a guest role, so *Saints Row IV* is already at a huge advantage.



BATMAN: ARKHAM CITY

FOR YEARS WE suffered, with no good Batman games to satiate our urges to punch people in the face while dressed as a small flying mammal. Thankfully, Rocksteady heard our call and smashed out two of the best superhero games ever made, redefining exactly what a Batman game could be. *Arkham Asylum* was incredible, but *Arkham City* makes everything that little bit better, opening things up with an open world, a ton of famous villains to fight and a combat system so refined that most action games since have just outright copied it.



LEGO MARVEL SUPER HEROES

IN A WAY, it's a shame that *Lego Marvel Super Heroes* is a Lego game. Offering a full, free-roaming New York and a huge number of Marvel heroes and villains to play as, this is arguably the most comprehensive and fully featured Marvel game ever. No other game lets you play as Daredevil, Nova, Moon Knight, She Hulk and about ten different versions of Iron Man, after all. Once again packed with fan service and nods to the comics and films, *Lego Marvel* is as much fun for grown adults who should know better (us) as it is for children.



SPIDER-MAN (2000)

DEVELOPED BY NEVERSOFT of *Tony Hawk's* fame, the PSone *Spider-Man* was an excellent example of a game dripping with fan service. Everything in this game is ripped directly from the comics, with a disposition toward characters featured in the awesome Nineties cartoon series. While the web-swinging is simple, the beat-'em-up gameplay is great fun and a broad variety in level design really helps. Still, presentation really is everything in this one, and from the excellent voice acting to the bunch of unlockable costumes, *Spider-Man* is a fan's dream.



VIEWTIFUL JOE

A side-scrolling beat-'em-up from crazy genius Hideki Kamiya, *Viewtiful Joe* is heavily inspired by the 'tokusatsu' Japanese superhero shows that fans of *Power Rangers* might be familiar with. With a bunch of powers based around the concept of film itself – speeding up, slowing down and zooming in – Joe takes the fight to hordes of bad guys in an attempt to rescue girlfriend Sylvia. *Viewtiful Joe* still plays wonderfully today, with smooth combat and beautiful visuals creating a truly timeless game. Be warned though: it gets very difficult. Only badasses need apply.

MORPHEUS HANDS-ON

Virtual reality is going to be big. Sure, people said that in the mid-Nineties with Nintendo's Virtual Boy, but headache-inducing vector lines were never going to cut it. Now, the tech exists to create stunning 3D worlds you'll actually want to visit...

OFFICIALLY ANNOUNCED BACK in March (but rumoured long before), Morpheus is Sony's answer to Oculus Rift, the Kickstarted wunderkind that reignited discussion on VR gaming. However, with Oculus recently bought up by Facebook for a wallet-melting £1.2 billion, the quirky upstart is now part of the corporate machine. Sony – despite not exactly being a hipster indie dev itself – is now in the strange but no doubt welcome position of being the cool alternative, helped in no small part by the early gains the PS4 has made this generation.

Anyone who's used Oculus will find using Morpheus similar – a chunky visor clamps over your head, thankfully with enough space to accommodate regular specs, then a pair of headphones is placed on top. The most striking difference is in the lenses, with Morpheus's feeling closer to your eye and rounder in shape. Each eye gets a 960x1080 screen of its own, combining for a full-HD stereoscopic view. Internal gyroscopes and accelerometers alter your view depending on the movement of your head. Unlike Oculus, Morpheus

can sync with the PlayStation Camera for enhanced motion tracking, while a PS Move wand could be used as an in-game sword or – just putting it out there – lightsaber.

However, for *Street Luge*, no controller beyond the Morpheus is required, and you even get to have a nice lie down while playing. In meatspace you're positioned horizontally like an actual luger; in-game you're racing to the bottom of a mountain road, swerving around traffic and other hazards with a tilt of your head. There's no braking or acceleration, just



"INTERNAL GYROSCOPES AND ACCELEROMETERS ALTER YOUR VIEW DEPENDING ON THE MOVEMENT OF YOUR HEAD"



Do you really want this toothy bastard all up in your face?

a profound sense of speed and movement as you rocket downhill. Although the controls are literally all in your head, you'll still find yourself jerking your body to the left or right to avoid collisions and letting out panicked yelps as you inevitably roll under an articulated lorry. Mercifully, there's no horrific first-person representation of your own death, just a penalty to your time in reaching the base.

Strangely, *Street Luge* feels closest to *Pain* on PS3, mostly for the speed and physics, plus a charmingly ludicrous concept. Despite the simplicity of the controls, there's actually some impressive play tactics possible here, such as using the slipstream of vehicles to boost your speed. It's one of the purest gaming experiences we've had on VR in any form yet, leaving you desperate to improve your time on the next go. Online versus play would make this a system seller.

Conversely, *The Deep* feels more like a tech demo that's been floating around (sorry) for a while. Dipped into an ocean wonderland in the supposed safety of a dive cage, you get to experience first-hand the hungry attentions of *Jaws*' less friendly cousin. Occasionally bounced around by the tides or the shark's love taps, you'll reflexively reach for the handles on the dive cage, even though you know consciously there's nothing to hold.

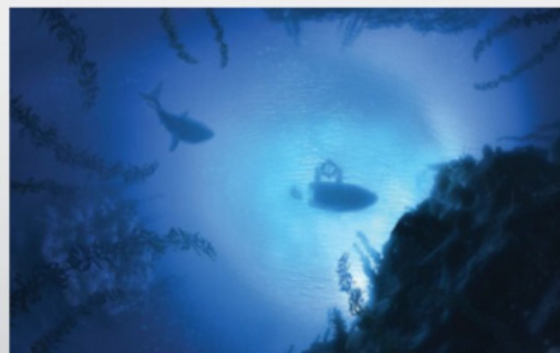
Both Oculus and Morpheus have been pushing shark-based experiences as a kind of shortcut to terror, but if there's a commonality there, it's only because it works. Being submerged in an aquatic, almost alien environment is powerfully immersive

and leaves you feeling profoundly vulnerable. Having something primal and hungry circling you and tearing pieces off your virtual safety net will have your heart racing – suddenly, we're confirmed galeophobes.

In between the shark picking at you like a tinfoil-wrapped meaty treat, you at least get to admire your surroundings. The draw distance is more suggestive than crystal clear at this point, but seeing the ocean with all its strange flora and fauna fading off in all directions is a wonderful and dizzying sight. The sensation is enhanced simply by having the weight of the Morpheus kit sitting on your head like some techno diving helmet, tricking your brain into thinking it's actually underwater.

There's only minimal interaction with the world at present though, just a flashlight that shines into the gloom, occasionally glinting off killer eyes. In the final version, a second player will be able to use the companion app on their phone or tablet to guide the person wearing the Morpheus, or communicate using real speech pumped through the headset. At the moment, that still feels a little gimmicky, and doesn't seem to alter the course of events. Something more to do in *The Deep* will help elevate it beyond a mere showcase.

With controls as simple or complex as developers want to make them and new ways of engaging players in the worlds they experience, that potential is truly staggering. This time around, virtual reality could be the biggest revolution in gaming since 3D worlds. Sony hasn't set a release date for Morpheus just yet, but expect it some point in 2015.



MORPHIC DREAMS

Sony London Studio isn't alone in pushing the limits of what Morpheus can do. These are just some of the games you'll be plugging into soon



EVE VALKYRIE, CCP Games

Pilot a ship through 360-degree space dogfights, set in the *EVE Online* universe. VR could help restore the long-neglected space-shooter genre to its former glory.



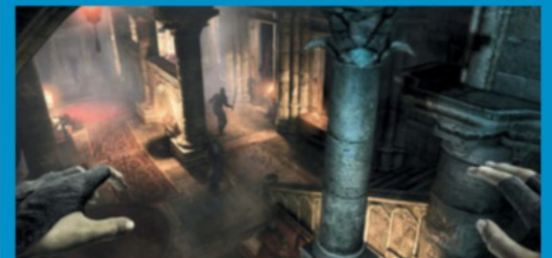
AMONG THE SLEEP, Krillbite Studios

There's little more terrifying than childhood fears, and playing as a toddler caught in nightmarish worlds is likely to trigger a few repressed traumas.



WAR THUNDER, Gaijin Entertainment

Multiple jets, ships, and ground vehicles to pilot from across the 20th Century, all in first-person VR? Don't mind if we do, actually.



THIEF, Eidos Montreal

Eidos's sneak-'em-up is flawed but hugely atmospheric as a conventional first-person adventure. Perhaps letting players experience Garrett's dark world for themselves will boost the game's appeal.

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Killzone Shadow Fall: Intercept

PS4's flagship shooter goes co-op at last



DETAILS

PUBLISHER
Sony

DEVELOPER
Guerrilla Games

PSN PRICE
£7.99 (add-on)
£15.99 (standalone)

PLAYERS
1-4

AGE RATING
18+

TWITTER
@Killzone

Trophies 7



YOU CAN'T FAULT

Guerrilla Games for effort. With *Killzone Shadow Fall* servers flagging since its debut back alongside the PS4 launch, the latest DLC expansion invites players back into its stunningly rendered world with what is essentially a horde mode.

It's not exactly the most original concept, but that's beside the point. In the hands of Guerrilla, *Intercept* brings the sheer grunt of *Killzone*'s exhilarating first-person gunplay and matches it with a handful of interesting ideas that offers more than just a merciless flood of bullets and blood.

Across the four maps available (with more promised in the near future), players are charged with capturing and defending three beacons – similar to *Shadow Fall*'s Warzone multiplayer mode – while Helghast forces swarm the map to seize control for themselves. Holding these beacons acquires points needed to win each game, but what's crucial is that each player banks their score at the home base at regular intervals. The longer you wait before banking the higher the multiplier, but if you die your score is zeroed. It's like the first-person shooter equivalent of *The Weakest Link*, albeit with a slightly less horrific adversary to overcome.

This slight tweak to the horde mode template in itself is enough to make the premise feel fresh. There's a satisfying risk/reward element at play: the temptation of holding back points to let your multiplier soar inevitably leads to greedy play, while actually removing yourself from your position to bank points can leave areas of the map vulnerable to attack.

Ensuring that each player fulfills their role has more weight here than in other similarly-themed modes in other shooters. The Assault class does much of the legwork, armed with the heftiest weaponry and flanked by a drone; he's primed to react quickly to danger spawning at different positions across the map.

Marksman is, as you can imagine, a sniper class that can offer support from a distance, while also loaded with explosive ammunition to clear out clusters of enemies.

But the final two class types are the most important. Tactician isn't armed with a particularly powerful starting weapon (a pistol, but can be upgraded to a shotgun or sub-machine gun as you level up) but can place three turrets around the map – a critical advantage when fending off Helghast waves.

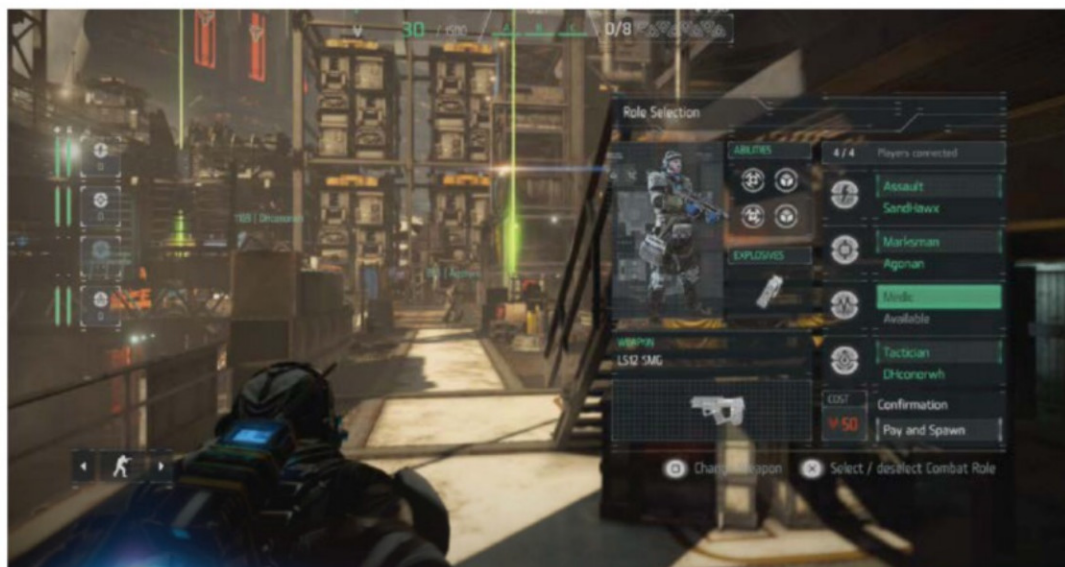
Lastly, the Medic, who not only keeps his comrades alive (crucial in keeping the score afloat – die and you eat into the points to revive) but also drops ammo refills to keep the bullets flying through the air – and considering we played one



match that lasted over an hour, it's a vital role in keeping up the flow of battle.

While a reliance on each player fulfilling his or her role and communication are fundamental to success, there's some help in a chunky mainframe that sits inside the home base.

Hoarding a certain amount of points unlocks Petrascite Capacitors across the map, which can be inserted into the terminal to unlock bonuses that can





“ONE MATCH LASTED OVER AN HOUR OWING TO THE RELENTLESS ONSLAUGHT OF ENEMIES”

be activated across the team. These range from the mildly absurd (jet-packs, while we'd never say are a bad thing, do little but bring the cool factor) to the game-changing offensive manoeuvres (mortar strikes aimed at each beacon will essentially clear the entire map of enemies, offering a moment to catch you breathe and regroup).

But it's by no means a breeze. As we previously mentioned, one match lasted over an hour – due in part to a weak link within our team – owing to the relentless onslaught of enemies. Waves aren't timed, contributing to a fast-paced and tactical co-op experience that really stands out on its own.

On top of that the AI will fight back harder when it feels like it's on the back heel. Cloaked enemies will start to emerge more frequently and one of three boss enemies will enter the map to up the ante.

It's not just the human players that can let the side down, though. Helghast troops have an odd inconsistency;

mostly excellent in forming strategies that push players to the limits, while on other occasions they'll just stand facing a wall waiting for a bullet to put them out of their misery.

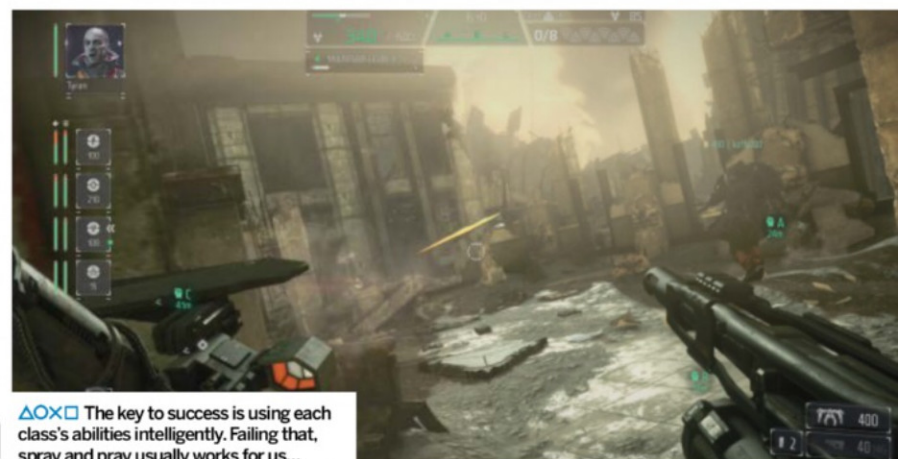
Still, it's easy to overlook this minor quibble given that Intercept proves to be one of the most engrossing multiplayer experiences to arrive in quite some time. It might not be the most innovative of ideas, but Guerrilla Games has shaken up the formula enough to make it a near-essential co-op experience, delivering proof that there's still plenty of life left in PS4's best FPS.

David Scarborough

VERDICT

Guerrilla delivers a punchy, immersive twist on multiplayer that demands your attention. It's not perfect, but there aren't many multiplayer experiences on PS4 that can touch it.

84%



△○×□ The key to success is using each class's abilities intelligently. Failing that, spray and pray usually works for us...

"THE FREEDOM TO IMPROVISE YOUR OWN STRATEGY IS SOMETHING THE SERIES HAS BEEN SORELY LACKING"

Sniper Elite III

Not quite the long shot you thought it'd be



Crunchy; that's probably the best word for *Sniper Elite III*. There's a crude satisfaction to the sound of

spinal cords being split in half by a 54mm round fired from a high-powered Lee-Enfield sniper rifle, and it's one that fans of the previous *Sniper Elite* on PS3 will know all too well. It seems every part of the human anatomy – when struck by such a hefty bullet – simply crunches out of existence, shattering into hundreds of tiny little pieces. And that makes for one hell of a game.

The latest in the series from Rebellion is something of a revelation, though. It's clear this is a developer paying attention to its naysayers, and while the title still suffers from the unavoidable problems of a game so clearly produced on a budget it is – at the very least – forward-looking. Improved, enhanced and all the better for it. Of course the slow-mo killcam the franchise is renowned for returns – testicle kills and all – but what impresses the most is the way it handles level design. Gone are the strictly linear missions of *Sniper Elite V2*, replaced

with wider, more open environments.

A bevy of hidden corridors and sniper spots litter the landscape, and though your objectives are rarely more than 'go here and kill some dudes', the freedom to improvise your own strategy is something the series has been sorely lacking.

It's all helped by a new 'relocation' mechanic, which halts the frustrating insta-spot of previous entries – whereby enemies would know *exactly* where you are after every single shot is fired – in favour of something much more realistic, though 'realistic' is perhaps an overstatement. Ultimately the concept focuses on moving about the terrain after each kill as enemies attempt to track down your last known location, earning you extra XP rewards but, moreover, confusing the enemy. Sadly it's a little too easy to abuse; dash back the way you came to cover the 50 meters or so required to go 'ghost' again and it's like you were never there. The AI is as daft as it has ever been, and that can make it a little too easy to fall into a comfortable – and perhaps even exploitative – game of back and forth.

DETAILS

PUBLISHER
505 Games

DEVELOPER
Rebellion

PSN PRICE
£44.99

PLAYERS
1-12

INSTALL SIZE
20.3 GB

AGE RATING
18

TWITTER
@SniperElite

Trophies 61





And the thing is, stealth is primarily the way you're going to want to play *Sniper Elite III*. Mechanically the gun control of the secondary weapons is better, but direct confrontation will likely have you restarting over and over. It's not an easy game, in that regard. All the same, the emphasis on constant movement means you'll be sticking with the crappy silenced pistol in the Welrod or shivving Nazis from behind – therefore losing a lot of the initial appeal of the game.

In truth the open levels – however great they are – do sometimes feel like they could do with a little bit of direction. The odd appearance of a tank (easily dispatched with land mines, unsurprisingly) doesn't provide the same tension, and there isn't really anything beyond that to draw you out of the formula you'll find yourself repeating. It's more of a shooting gallery than a sniper simulation and, frankly, that's a shame. By the end of its eight hours you'll have settled into a routine, and the game doesn't really attempt to do anything to mix things up at all. It's not that there ought to be a turret section or something

– please, anything but that – to affect the pacing, just that there's no real sense of urgency about proceedings.

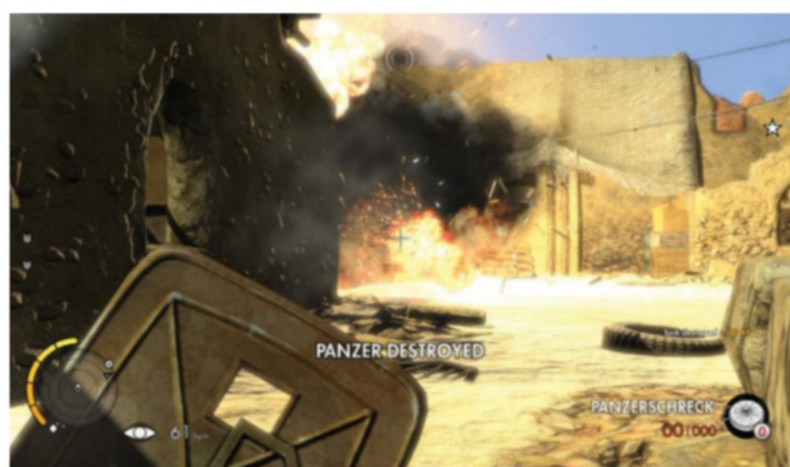
But this is progress, all the same. Sure, *Sniper Elite III* is rough around the edges, but it offers just enough that it makes up for all that. It succeeds as a *shooter* thanks in large part to that crunchiness, yet as a *sequel* it is improved in clearly defined, tangible ways. It's still a fair distance away from providing the ultimate sniping experience – we'd like for there to be more high-profile assassinations, and all the planning that goes with it – but while there is work yet to be done on the series there are, if nothing else, very few games out there quite like *Sniper Elite*.

Adam Barnes

VERDICT

A vastly improved sequel that maintains what the series did well and improves on the things it didn't. There's still plenty to be done before it's a must-have franchise, however.

72%



PLAY CHALLENGE



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TWO BIRDS, ONE STONE

▲ TRY AND GET two kills with a single bullet. Extra points if you can manage to kill the second from a ricochet.



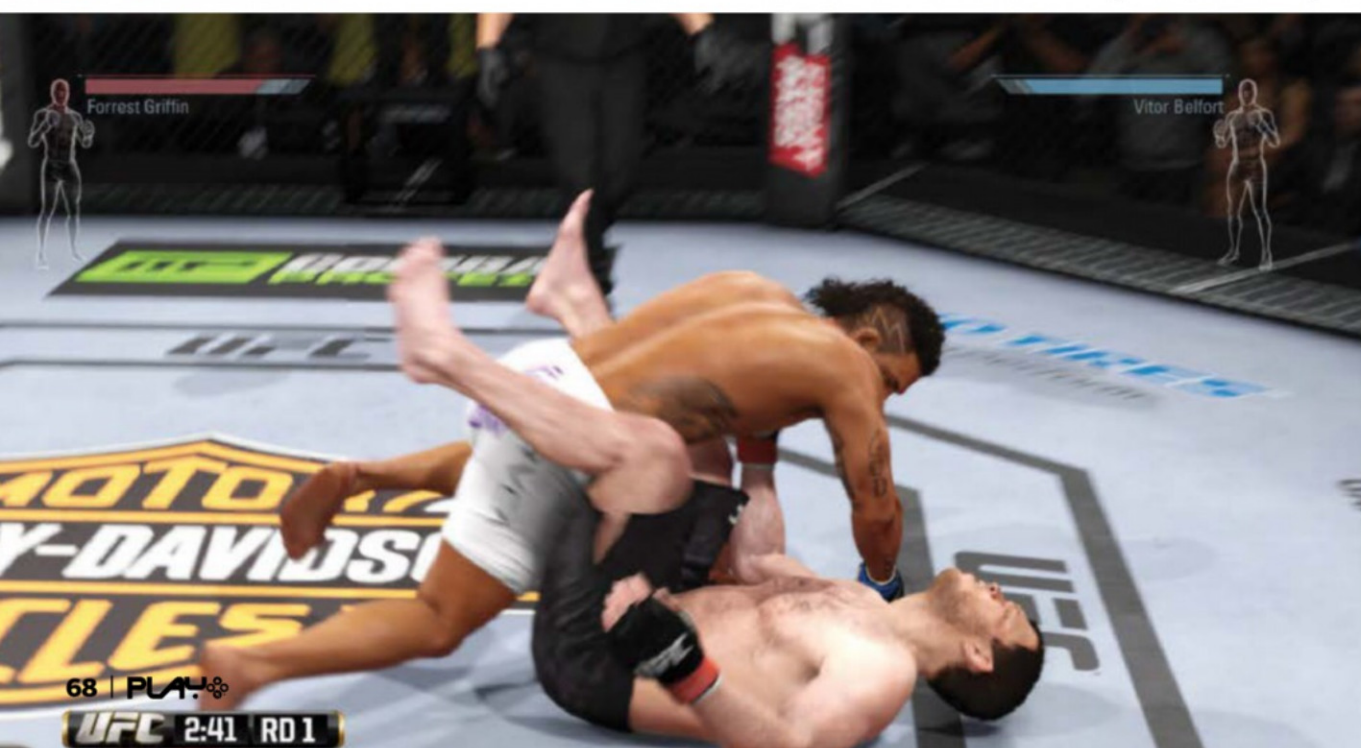
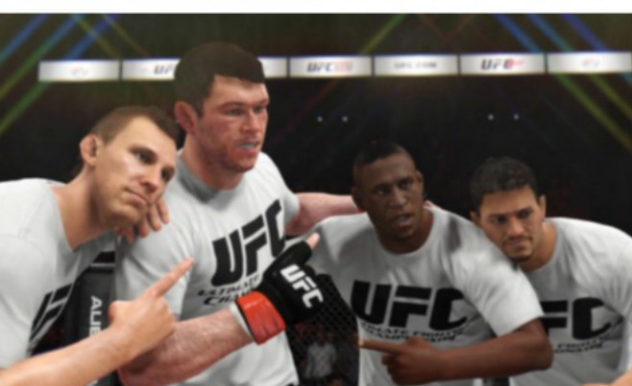
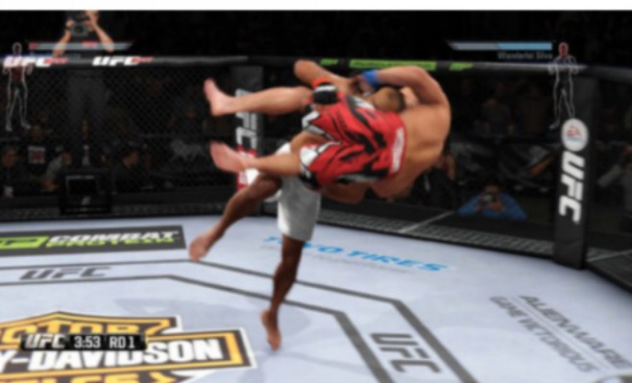
TWO STONES, ONE BULLET

■ CRUSHING A MAN'S bollocks shouldn't be nearly as fun as this, but see if you can pop both testicles with one bullet.

Beaten our trials? Let us know @PlayMag_UK!

EA Sports UFC

Kick, punch, it's all in the mind



DETAILS

PUBLISHER
EA

DEVELOPER
EA Sports

PSN PRICE
£49.99

PLAYERS
1-2

AGE RATING
16+

TWITTER
@EASportsUFC

Trophies 33



THE CLOSER WE get to true photorealism, the more apparent even the slightest of visual issues

becomes. It's something that really came to our attention towards the tail end of the last generation – the brilliantly rendered but poorly fleshed out characters of *Heavy Rain* and *Beyond*, for instance, or *LA Noire*'s human-heads-on-mannequin-bodies trip to the Uncanny Valley. And again here, the amount of work EA has clearly put into getting fighters to look closer to their real-world counterparts than ever is impressive, but it only makes it even more jarring when what looks like the real thing doesn't really move or behave like it.

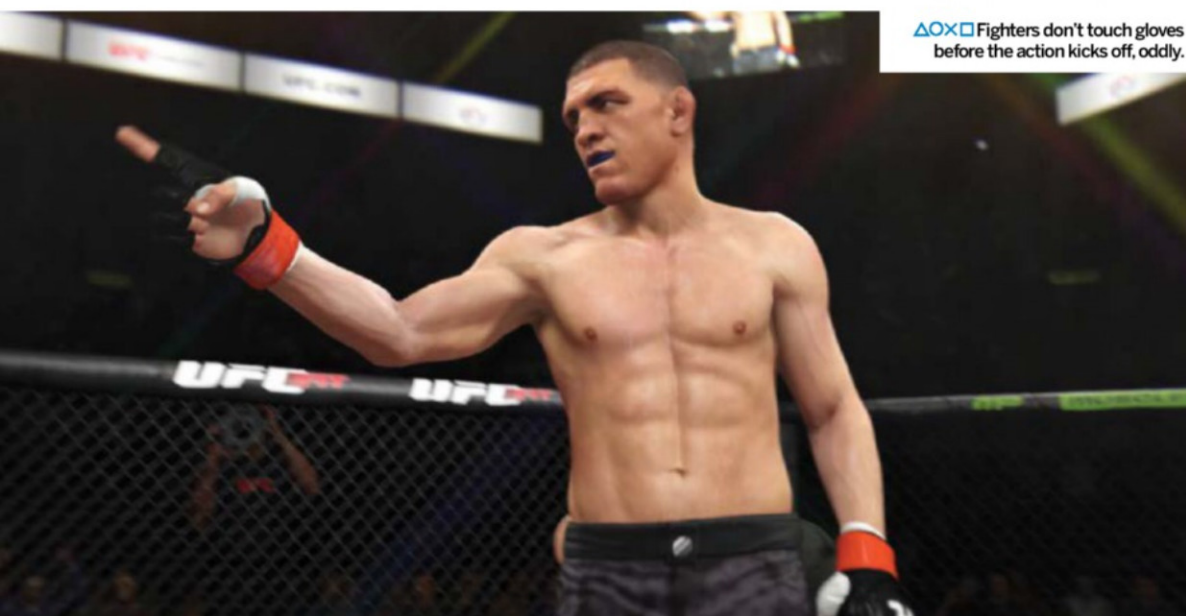
It's most noticeable in the animation, at least to begin with. THQ's UFC games could never shake that robotic sense of motion and while EA has taken great strides in eliminating this, animation is still far from fluid. It's somewhat understandable – with so many different attacks, stances, defensive options and grapples available, it'd take a lifetime to create unique animations to connect every single combination possible. But the result is that despite looking like the real deal in stills, the lack of any real kind of flow or organic development to tussles adds an unwelcome degree of predictability

to what should be one of the most unpredictable sports out there.

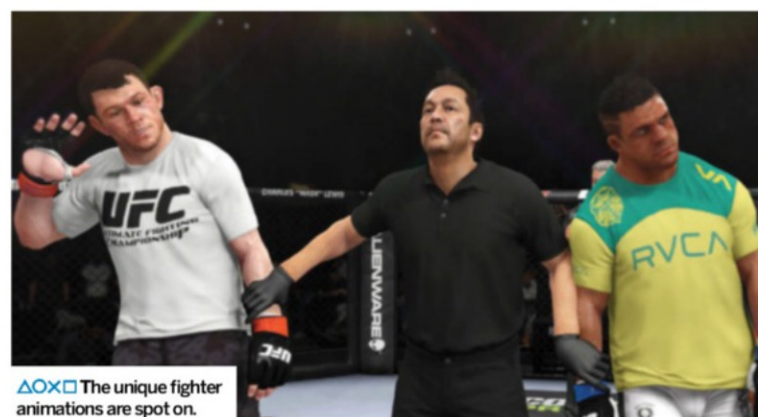
UFC can pretty much be broken down into three equally complex parts – striking, clinches and the ground game – and given that this was made by the team behind *Fight Night*, we'll give you one guess as to which area is strongest. There's no Total Punch Control here, though – each limb is simply assigned to a face button on the DualShock 4 with shoulder buttons and directions serving as modifiers to offer a vast array of possible punches and kicks. Like the occasionally awkward animation, though, the moveset here can also help shatter the illusion of realism unless you know exactly what you're doing. Outlandish attacks seemingly only included because landing them as the final blow 'would be cool' sit among more useful and realistic tactical options, so it's not rare to see diving punches and cartwheel kicks come out when you least expect them.

The stamina system works well enough, making it dangerous to burn all your energy on a lengthy barrage lest the other guy lock in an easy submission. It's still possible to defend yourself while exhausted, and to throw strikes too – they do less damage but jab-mashers have an annoying advantage as their constant stream of weak and feeble strikes can still stuff clinch attempts and such. Watch two skilled players go at it and it's quite something to behold, fighters weaving around predicted strikes, baiting out parries to prise openings for guaranteed counters and generally making the game look amazing. If you put the hours in, this is your reward, and although we respect the decision to run with a move list that stretches to the moon and back, we can't imagine there'll be too many people who will make the necessary investment to get the game working at its best.

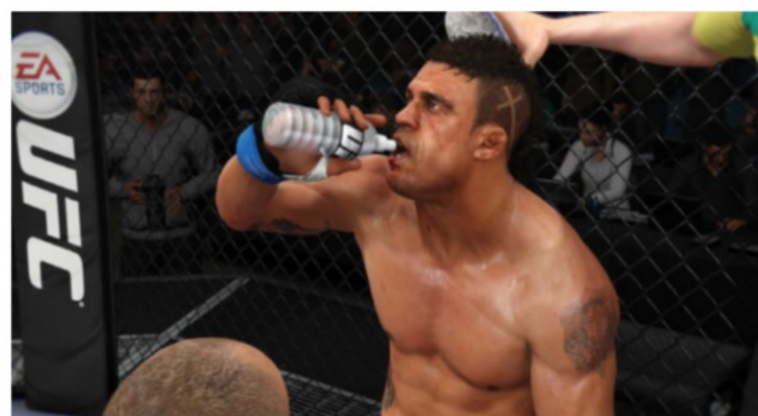
This is largely because the other two pillars of the game (clinches and ground work) are borderline impenetrable, even compartmentalised as they are – while the



△○×□ Fighters don't touch gloves before the action kicks off, oddly.



△○×□ The unique fighter animations are spot on.



"IT'S PERHAPS IMPOSSIBLE TO ACCURATELY EMULATE THE FREEDOM AND POSSIBILITIES OF A REAL LIFE GRAPPLE"

canned animations and fixed positions are another blow to realism, it's perhaps impossible to accurately emulate the freedom and possibilities of a real-life grapple. Even with relatively limited options here, position battles are still confusing even if you know what you're doing. Quarter-circle movements of the right stick allow you to transition to advantageous positions but an understanding of the sport is almost crucial to make this work – unless you've got a reason to fight your way to a mount or Thai clinch position, you're better off just landing a few cheap blows or slipping out and returning to a stand-up fight. That's where the gameplay is best anyway, which is probably why it's so easy to get back to your feet. Submissions should be a viable tactic but between the odd little mini-game that powers them, the staggered approach

and the ease of escaping them, only a handful of specialist fighters can reliably make the other guy tap out.

This is a game that only really shines when played by two experts, so multiplayer is where it's at. As you improve, you'll learn to react to your opponent's habits and exploit their weaknesses, exactly as would happen in a real fight. And given that it's best played in multiplayer (there's not all that much to do solo anyway, truth be told), it's a shame that some dumb Trophies have broken an otherwise interesting online suite. Battling your way up through the ranks is awesome, but Trophies for win streaks via certain criteria mean that opponents often quit to avoid losing their current run – we've yet to complete a single submission online, because the mini-game buys cowardly opponents more than enough time to safely quit out. We've even seen better fighters who clearly

would win by decision disconnect in the dying seconds because they needed to win by submission or knock-out. It's embarrassing, frankly.

If you know the sport and are willing to put in the hours, there's enough good stuff here to warrant a purchase – just don't expect the realism of the fights themselves to live up to the standards of the character models. If you don't fall into that rather exclusive category, though, just wait it out. It took the team a few games to nail the *Fight Night* formula and there are enough hints of greatness here to suggest that EA's first genuinely brilliant MMA game could only be a sequel or two away.

Luke Albigés

VERDICT

If EA can get the rest of the game to the same level as the stand-up fighting for the inevitable sequel(s), it'll have a winner on its hands. For now, this is one for the hardcore.

75%

TROPHY CABINET



YOU GOT SOMEWHERE TO BE?
A first-minute win isn't as hard as it sounds but if you're struggling, just connect a second controller and smash the hell out of nobody.



I'LL STAND THANKS
If you've played online, you'll likely have encountered a takedown spammer. Be ready on the right stick and thank them and their scrubby play for your new Trophy.





Murdered: Soul Suspect

One crime not worth solving



DETAILS

PUBLISHER
Square Enix

DEVELOPER
Airtight Games

PSN PRICE
£49.99

PLAYERS
1

INSTALL SIZE
9.4 GB

AGE RATING
16

TWITTER
@Murdered

Trophies 49



WHOEVER THOUGHT

THE afterlife could be so dull? Not dull in a humorous way as in, say, *Grim Fandango*, where

the recently deceased find themselves confronted by a limbo little different than the real world – *Murdered: Soul Suspect* isn't quite as in tune with irony as that. No, we're talking dull as in inherently boring. This is a game that takes the imaginative concept of a detective investigating his own death and turns it into a point-and-click lite that's all too literally lacking in life.

The dead detective in question is Ronan O'Connor, a tattooed and chain-smoking Salem, Massachusetts cop chasing down the sadistic Bell Killer. Things don't go as planned, and after being shot several times in the chest Ronan awakes as a sleuthing spectre, invisible to the NPCs around him.

The goal is to discover the identity of the Bell Killer, thereby allowing Ronan to head towards the proverbial white light and join his deceased wife in the beyond. This investigation takes place across the small hub world of Salem, which the

player must traverse to get from one crime scene to the next.

Game logic isn't *Murdered: Soul Suspect's* strong point, with Ronan able to easily pass through some walls but not others (we're told they've been consecrated to disallow such supernatural beings heading wherever they like – or, more to the point, itinerant players). You'll often butt up against the spectral obstacles of Salem, each one hemming you into the critical path that leads to the next objective.

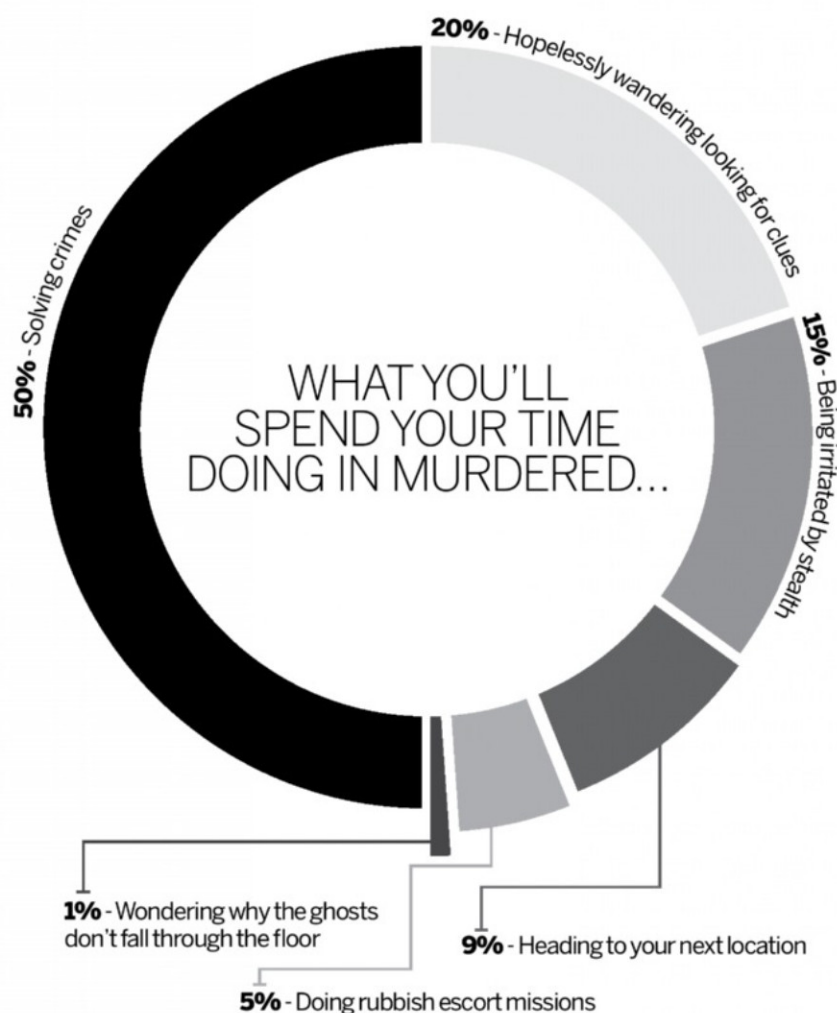
Investigations make up the core of the game, each with inflections of Telltale-esque adventure games but little of their narrative clout. You must use your newly endowed ghostly powers to poke around crime scenes, exploring each area to locate clues that are often highlighted by the glow of a small prompt. Mostly all you need to do is head to a clue and hit X, but some descriptive challenges see you select certain words that best describe a clue, while some NPCs need to be possessed and have their actions influenced from within. This probably sounds more exciting than it is. For the most part, possessing an NPC simply

lets you listen to the same two irrelevant sound bytes on a loop – the game only allows more when a puzzle specifically demands it.

The investigations are incredibly simple, the only challenge coming when one clue can't be located and you're left hopelessly wandering a crime scene until a button prompt finally appears. Once you do have all necessary information you can trigger a final test by picking what you deem to be the three most relevant clues to solve the question at hand. The logic here can often be obtuse, but thankfully if you fail, all you do is score lower in the game's lazy attempt at a ranking system.

More player agency comes in platforming sections played as a possessed cat; escort missions where the player distracts guards while medium Joy makes her way across the environment; and stealth sections in which Ronan must avoid or take out roaming demons.

The latter are the most groan-inducing elements of the game, and feel more like padding than anything else. Roaming demons with poor narrative purpose move along tightly scripted paths, and if you wander into their direct line of



sight they screech wildly and home in, sucking your soul and killing you a second time. In order to remain undetected you can teleport between the stationary remnants of other spirits – a tactic you'll have to mash randomly when caught in order to escape. You can sneak up on these demons and exorcise them by following a simple QTE, and while this does invite an element of stealth, the ability to see the demons through walls by pressing R1 makes any challenge relatively non-existent.

At the tail end of *Murdered: Soul Suspect*'s short six hours and a story that never takes hold, it's difficult not to feel that this is one game that sounded brilliant in the pitch, but has been seriously watered down by the realities of development and budget. The ideas are

flat, unexplored and repetitive, lacking the imagination in a premise that promised so much.

With *Quantum Theory* and *Dark Void*, Airtight has proven that it's capable of creating worlds with inventive mechanics, yet little of this is apparent in *Murdered: Soul Suspect*, a game that fails to develop its ideas beyond the very basics.

Chris McMahon

VERDICT

An adventure game that never gets playful enough with its premise, complete with wobbly gameplay that feels like a chore for a developer more interested in narrative.

48%



Ultra Street Fighter IV

Here comes an old challenger



DETAILS

PUBLISHER

Capcom

DEVELOPER

Capcom

RELEASE DATE

August (Digital Update Out Now)

PSN PRICE

£19.99 (Digital Update £11.99)

PLAYERS

1-8

AGE RATING

12+

TWITTER

@Yoshi_OnoChin

Trophies 9



THIS IS PROBABLY the easiest review we've ever had to write, because we've known that *Street Fighter IV* is a good game for six years. True to form, Capcom has been milking the successful fighter ever since its 2008 release, with this technically the fifth and (apparently) final revision. It's the best version yet, thanks to the five new characters, extra stages and balance tweaks across the board, but it's still not without its issues.

Chief among these is the fact that the main additions feel a little on the lazy side. Four characters and most of the new stages are lifted wholesale from *Street Fighter X Tekken* and the one brand new fighter is basically just Cammy wearing Vega's mask. She plays quite a bit differently, to be fair – a rushdown-centric charge character with tricky teleports and easy mixups – but even with a different engine, the rest play largely as they did in *SFXT*. Hugo's armoured Fierce punch looked to be a game-changer on paper, but with damage absorption coming late in the attack, it's only marginally useful outside of the super-tech new Armour Cancels it allows. The new guys don't even have their own Trials combos to learn and build upon, making online guides and Training mode experimentation pretty

much the only ways to learn how best to use and abuse them.

You might need to go looking for a new main too, since not a single member of the existing cast has managed to sneak through completely unaltered. The full change list is long enough to fill most of this magazine and, since so much of it deals in single frame tweaks to timings or matchup-specifics buffs and nerfs, it's only really relevant to competition-standard players. That said, the rebalancing process combined with new mechanics such as Red Focus (burn meter for an upgraded Focus that can absorb multiple hits) and delayed wake-up (stay down longer to deter overly

offensive players) will likely change the overall tier list quite a bit.

These kinds of things take months to be shaken out but rest assured that if your old favourite isn't cutting it any more, there are just enough little tweaks to everyone else to make replacing them a simple and even enjoyable process. Or, in local versus at least, you can simply use Edition Select to rewind time and play as a previous version of a character. This is basically broken from a balance perspective – Vanilla Sagat sends his regards – but works based on mechanics as well as balance changes and move properties from the version chosen, so an original *Street Fighter IV* version character, for example, wouldn't



ΔOXΔ W-Ultra allows use of either Ultra combo but with a damage nerf to each. The characters it benefits most get more severe damage cuts.



"THE ONE BRAND NEW FIGHTER IS BASICALLY JUST CAMMY WEARING VEGA'S MASK"



△○×□ Poor DeeJay – no amount of rebalancing can make him a good character, it would appear.

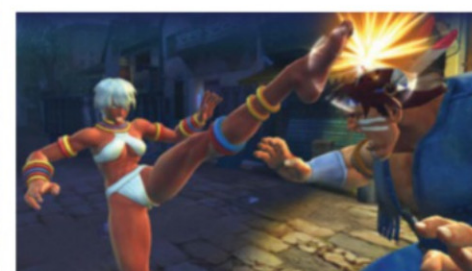
have access to later improvements such as selectable Ultras or Red Focus.

No matter how many frames are tweaked here or commands altered there, this is still *Street Fighter IV* – a slow, defensive fighting game that tends to be more generous with preventing and punishing attacking attempts by the other player than it is in encouraging you to unleash your own. Throws are still way too effective, beating out most other inputs unlike in more elegant systems such as *VF5*'s strike/evade/grab cycle. And since we downed tools with *Arcade Edition* a few years back, alternatives such as *King Of Fighters XIII*, *BlazBlue: Chrono Phantasma* and *Injustice* have come along, offering more technical, faster and more explosive experiences respectively and making it quite tricky to get back into *Street Fighter IV*, which is actually quite a boring fighting game when played to a decent level. The mechanics are all there and the

combo system certainly has plenty of complexity and depth to it but sadly, most of the interesting stuff that you can do with the toolset Capcom hands you will never be seen outside of training mode and combo showcase videos.

Further improvements to the online side of the game do their bit to lure players back into kicking the crap out of one another but it's not like they really needed to – even so many years on, *Street Fighter IV* still seems to have a more active community than any beat-'em-up released since, no great surprise when it's still the tournament fighter of choice. Additional modes are welcome, though, even if they offer little actually new, but then *SFIV* already had a respectable suite of its own.

If you're still playing *Street Fighter IV* or looking for a reason to go back to it, *Ultra* is an easy recommendation. If somehow you've gone this long without actually owning a copy, the retail



release due in August comes packaged with all of the costume DLC, so it's probably worth holding out for that. It's the best version of the biggest game in its field and deserves playing based on that fact alone – we'll probably just pop back for a visit rather than move back in, but that's got more to do with how good the competition has become elsewhere in the genre and being somewhat burned out after six years of having to deal with scrubby Flowchart Kens online, to be honest.

Luke Albigés

VERDICT

Tweaks and refinements mean this is the best version of Capcom's fighting renaissance. But six years after the game's initial release, we're understandably quite hungry for *Street Fighter V*.

85%



Grid Autosport

Time for an engine overhaul



YOU COULD SEE the release of Codemasters' *Grid Autosport* as a sign that the last generation of consoles is not dead yet, especially when it comes to racing games. Unfortunately, that would be a foolish conclusion to draw. The third title in the franchise's PS3 run follows on from the likes of *Gran Turismo Sport* by foresaking next-gen hardware for the mainstream allure of Sony's third console. However, without the extra boost that a PS4 release undoubtedly creates, *Grid Autosport* is a typical offering from a developer wishing to play it safe, avoid an expensive PS4 flop, and milk the PS3 cash cow just that little bit longer.

Grid 2 was widely commended by the gaming press (that's us) but the general consensus from consumers (that's you) was a little less positive due to its predominantly arcade-based handling. Unfortunately, if you are hoping for physics rich in nuance and realism you will be disappointed. While better than its predecessor, *Grid Autosport*'s simulation of car dynamics continues to masquerade as an arcade game in simulation clothing.

In anything more powerful than a hairdryer, you'll find cornering accompanied by the heady aroma of tyre smoke as almost every car has a hideous predilection for hanging its arse out. It seems like Codemasters just can't shrug off the soggy, populist-friendly handling

model that is easy to pick up but will likely leave you feeling a little cold. Front-wheel drive cars are a little better but, from a driver's point of view, it doesn't really leave you with a smile on your face.

Grip levels do improve in cars that utilise aerodynamic grip (like the 'Open Wheel' category) but the game's engine feels distinctly unsophisticated next to its simulation rivals, and lacking in character compared to its arcade counterparts. It's definitely a bit more Volvo than Ferrari.

The main single-player mode sees you take up the role of a faceless racer working their way through the racing ranks before achieving greatness with the Ravenwest team (home of Nathan

McKane, who must be nearly 100 years old by now). Despite providing five different categories in which to race (Touring Cars, Endurance, Open Wheel, Tuner, and Street) and opening up a range of ways in which to progress your career, the general grind through experience levels, gradually opening up more series with faster cars, is uninspiring.

While *Race Driver: Grid* allowed you to create your own team, hire your own teammate, sign your own sponsor deals, and design your own livery, *Autosport* shuns this approach for a more basic focus. You are now simply a driver, free to sign for any team. Keep putting in impressive performances and, you

DETAILS

PUBLISHER
Codemasters

DEVELOPER
Codemasters Racing Studio

PSN PRICE
£39.99

PLAYERS
1-12

INSTALL SIZE
4.2 GB

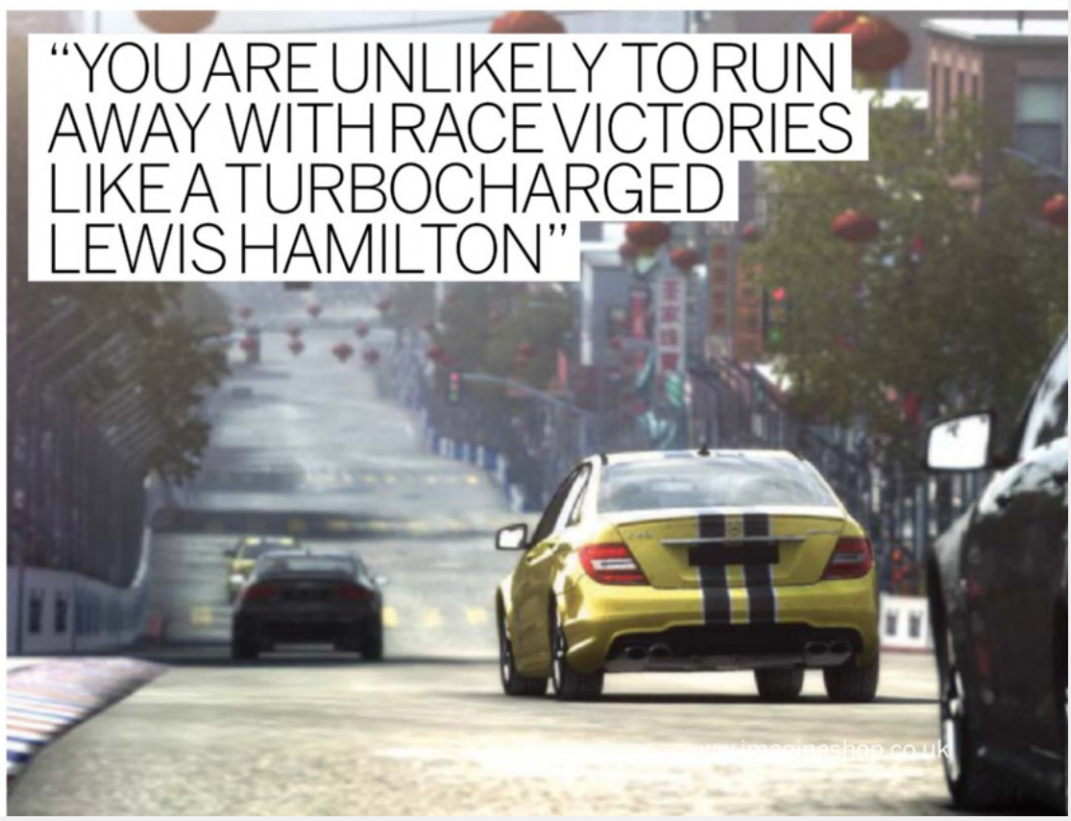
AGE RATING
3+

TWITTER
@Codemasters

Trophies 51



"YOU ARE UNLIKELY TO RUN AWAY WITH RACE VICTORIES LIKE A TURBOCHARGED LEWIS HAMILTON"





△×□ Good racing games are addictive. *Grid Autosport* is about as addictive as a kick in the teeth.



△×□ *Grid* seems to be a franchise running out of fuel and waiting for a next-gen fill up.



△×□ AI racers don't drive on rails, but they do seem to drive on drugs.

guessed it, the better teams will start to notice. It's a fairly linear approach that lacks the depth of previous incarnations, something that is also evident in the dull menus (if you like grey, you'll be delighted).

Where *Grid Autosport* does do well is in its sound replication. Every car features a distinctive and realistic engine note along with plenty of crowd-pleasing flame. Little details like the blue flame from the McLaren P1 are well executed (as is the replication of that car's active aerodynamics) while the circuit graphics are impressive if not outstanding. The lighting effects in the predominantly night-based Endurance races (which feature a tricky tyre management feature) look glorious, even if many of the circuits feature a weird apocalyptic glow from their surrounding countryside.

The racing is fierce out on track too meaning that, whatever your skill level, you are unlikely to run away with race victories like a turbocharged Lewis Hamilton. Going wheel-to-wheel with the AI is a delicate affair thanks to their love of braking stupendously late and cannoning into the side of you (many expletives were yelled). When it comes to online, racing is

controlled through the RaceNet system, where you can take on weekly challenges either going for individual glory, or as part of a club. Either way, it's a fairly basic setup, certainly nowhere near the complexity of PS4's *Driveclub* or *The Crew*.

As a racer, *Grid Autosport* falls firmly in the midfield and, as a game to round off the last gen of consoles, it is in definite need of a mechanical overhaul (especially after we were left unable to qualify for one race when the computer proceeded to complete all three laps for us). It's unlikely to win *Grid* many new fans and, due to a lack of real innovation – the in-car view returns but all cockpit details are lazily blurred out – it is not really a must-have even if you are a franchise fanatic.

Josh Barnett



Grab yourself a mate, plonk them beside you on the couch and go old-school by simply completing a split-screen race.



Make sure you pick a team with easy sponsor objectives as you'll need to satisfy all six in one season for this tricky trophy.

VERDICT

Grid Autosport arrived on the racing scene without too much of a fanfare and, unfortunately for franchise fans, it is going to leave the podium without spraying any champagne.

67%

IN THIS SERIES



RACE DRIVER: GRID Codemasters' first PS3 game to utilise the EGO 1.0 engine saw you developing your own team on your path to personal driving glory.

REVIEW ROUND-UP

IN THE JRPG market, quantity appears to be king these days – there's a new *Neptunia* game every eight seconds, the *Tales* team doesn't even wait until one game is out to announce the next one and there are more *Atelier* games a year than there are EA Sports games. This latest one, **ATELIER RORONA PLUS: THE ALCHEMIST OF ARLAND [1]** is, in case the 'Plus' part of the title didn't give it away, a remake of the first game in the series to use 3D characters. They were pretty dodgy back in the day, but *Plus* brings the visuals in line with the best the series has to offer, which is to say a bit better but still dodgy. To be fair, the game does look nice on Vita, but animation is still as robotic as ever. It's a shame too, because the game functions rather well – Gust has taken the best parts of all of these games to change history and make this pretty much the definitive alchemy-based JRPG, even if the insistence on ditzy girls, manly men, skimpy outfits and questionable dialogue means it isn't likely to go down well with anyone searching for something more progressive.

△○×□ The alchemy system is better than ever, allowing you to pick which properties the final item gets.



But in that regard, *Rorona* is positively tame compared to a lot of the more 'out-there' Japanese games, including **MONSTER MONPIECE [2]**. It's a wonder that it's even been localised at all, since everything from the concept to the art might be seen as acceptable in its country of origin but we can't see it being particularly well-received over here. On a gameplay level, it's about as harmless as a game can be – it's effectively a card battle SRPG, albeit not one that has any level of depth until you start to

“LEVELLING UP YOUR MONSTER GIRLS MAKES YOU FEEL LIKE A TOP-TIER PERV”

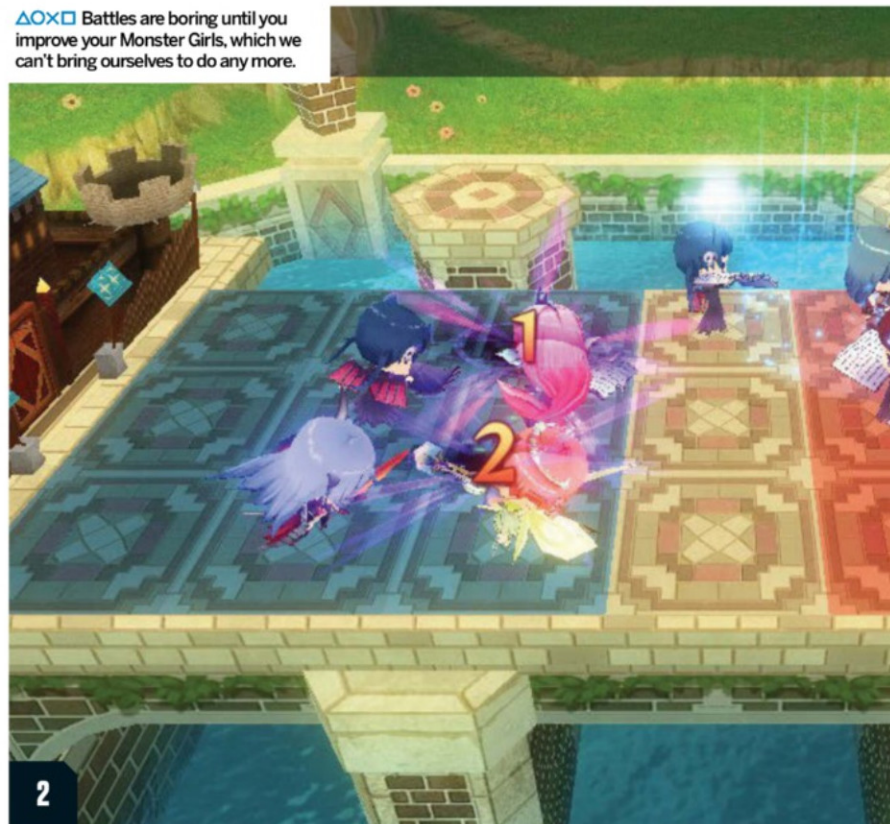
level up your collection of Monster Girls. This is where things go awry, because the way in which you do so will make you feel like a card-carrying, top-tier perv. Holding the Vita vertically, you're asked to touch, pinch and stroke the Monster Girl in question to fill a meter, with success rewarded with a 'super' mode where all you do is grab both touch panels and jerk vigorously. It's hardly subtle,

and neither is the payoff – Monster Girls apparently power up by taking their clothes off, leaving you with suggestive pictures of troublingly young anime girls wearing next to – or, in some cases, actually – nothing. Some of the worst offending images have been cut from the localised version (having seen them, we've no trouble understanding why) but still, we've never felt dirtier playing a game and it's a shame because the level of strategy involved in the battles seriously improves the more you indulge in this sordid excuse for gameplay.

There's nothing so brazen or blatant about PS4 oddity **ENTWINED [3]** but at least *Monster Monpiece* gave us something to talk about – *Entwined* is an hour-long, one-note art game that just makes us want to play *Rez*. The premise is simple enough – use the two analogue sticks to guide a pair of creatures through



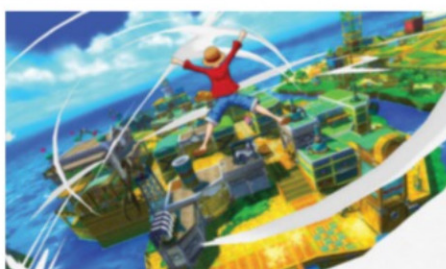
△○×□ Battles are boring until you improve your Monster Girls, which we can't bring ourselves to do any more.





collectibles and coloured gates at the same time – and while we get the single-player co-op thing it's going for, 3D really hurts the gameplay. Complex gate patterns are often hidden by other obstacles in the foreground, reducing things to guesswork and/or memory tests at times, plus there's no crescendo to each stage – the minimal soundtrack could do with growing and evolving as you edge closer to success as in *Rez*, while the timing of collecting stuff makes it feel like a rhythm-action game that doesn't understand its own genre. Succeed in bringing the two together and your reward is the chance to fly around a small arena collecting more junk, only to have to poop it all out in the sky to finish the level. As payoffs go, it's pretty weak.

The same cannot be said for finishing a race in **MOTOGP 14 [4]**, since getting to grips with the game's realistic handling and managing to make it as far as a chequered flag feels like a monumental achievement in and of itself. Sure, you can just drop the difficulty and chuck on a bunch of assists if



you like but the less you rely on the game, the more satisfying each race feels (and the more gutting each crash is, if only because you're fully aware that it was entirely your fault). There's a respectable visual jump over the PS3 games considering this isn't a big-budget game, while the handling is as good as the series has ever seen. With novel modes that will delight fans of motorsport and a flexible handling model, this might not be the best showcase for PS4 as a platform but it's easily the best two-wheeled racer we've seen in some time.

And from that to the best *One Piece* game, not least because **ONE PIECE: UNLIMITED WORLD RED [5]** is the first in a while to escape the *Dynasty Warriors* template and see the IP treated on its own terms. Well, we say that – the game is basically *One Piece Monster Hunter*, with huge bosses to take down as you team up



△○×□ It's nice to see these guys are able to stay on their bikes – we generally weren't quite so capable.



with other members of the Straw Hat Crew and score loot for taking down enemies 20 times your own size. Collect the necessary junk and you'll be able to upgrade various shops and resources around town, as well as having rewards that come in the form of words and phrases that can be equipped and used to power up your chosen crew members. It's close to *Kingdom Hearts 2* in terms of its action-centric combat – that's no bad thing and, combined with the *Monster Hunter* Lite structure and original story, it leads to a great-looking action combat game that fans and newcomers alike can enjoy.

△○×□ Each of the crew has their own abilities to use in the field, from digging up buried items to slashing through barriers.





PUBLISHER RED OCTANE | DEVELOPER HARMONIX | FORMAT PLAYSTATION 2

RELEASE DATE 8 NOVEMBER 2005 | PLAY SCORE 92% | METACRITIC SCORE 91/100

The Making Of... GUITAR HERO

When it first arrived on the scene, Guitar Hero was a revelation. It ushered in a new genre that would break down many preconceived ideas about what a videogame could be. John Robertson talks to lead designer Rob Kay about how it all began



Musically, what was 2005 all about? The answer, perhaps: illegitimate pop stars, annoying animated animals and pre-teen pop groups, with Shayne Ward, McFly and Crazy Frog occupying three of the top four chart spots for the year. Without a note of genuine talent between them, you'd be forgiven for thinking that it was a time absent from musical experimentation and progression.

Dig a little deeper, though, past the charts and MTV, past primetime BBC Radio 1 and Simon Cowell, and a different picture emerges. 2005 was the year that our music consumption options expanded, where we could 'feel' the music like never before and get closer to some of the most respected artists of all time. It's also the year that videogames went truly mainstream.

We have *Guitar Hero* to thank for all of that. The Harmonix-developed game opened gamers to music, and non-gamers to games, like nothing had managed before. As such, it has become one of the most important games of all time – a game that has managed to transcend its medium, attain genuine cultural significance and spawned one of the most profitable and popular entertainment forms of its time.

Its origins, however, were very much of the niche persuasion; aimed more at keyboard and controller junkies than the mainstream. The relative success of *Frequency* and *Amplitude*, released by Harmonix between 2001 and 2003, convinced the developer that there was an audience for complex rhythm titles. But to be truly successful, such games had to be more easily understood. Rob Kay, lead designer on *Guitar Hero* and, later, *Rock Band*, remembers that transition from niche to mainstream.

"It was very clear that people didn't understand *Frequency* and *Amplitude* when they heard about them.



BLUFFER'S GUIDE

Everything you need to know in five facts



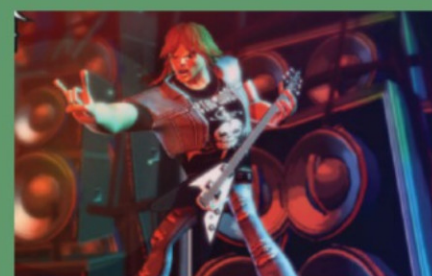
1 The guitar peripheral is a 3/4 scale replica of a black and white Gibson SG.



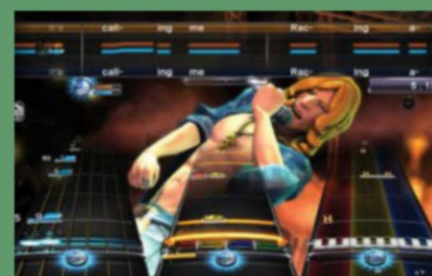
2 30 of the 47 tracks are covers of popular rock tracks; the other 17 came from indie bands.



3 Two guitarists can play on the same screen at the same time in points-based competition.



4 *Guitar Hero's* success resulted in the developer being bought by MTV owner Viacom in 2006.



5 Harmonix went on to find success with *Rock Band*, adding drums and a microphone.

It was only when they played them that they understood what they were. Once they played and understood them they loved them, but that lack of initial understanding severely limited the audience.

"Before going on to *Guitar Hero*, though, Harmonix did *Karaoke Revolution*. That game had the opposite problem of *Frequency/Amplitude* in that the gameplay wasn't as addictive from a game perspective, but everyone instantly understood what the game was about.

"AT THE TIME WE DIDN'T HAVE ANY SENSE THAT IT WOULD BE A BIG HIT"

"We thought *Guitar Hero* was a great chance to marry both worlds. To marry that instant understanding of what the game is about (you're a musician on stage) with the addictive beat-matching gameplay successes of *Frequency* and *Amplitude*."

Such an approach proved incredibly popular. *Guitar Hero* went on to shift almost 2.5 million units, a number made more impressive considering the fact it was a one-system game only ever released on the PS2. Its sequel would more than double that figure.

"At the time we didn't have any sense that it would be a big hit," insists Kay. "We were just trying to do the right thing to make the game good. *Guitar Hero* was more of a passion project – it wasn't just something that upper management decided to take on and push. We knew everyone on the team was going to enjoy making it and that was our motivation."

Undoubtedly, a major part of the success came down to the fact that you were actually holding a guitar in your hand. Previous console-based rhythm games, as far back as the

ever-charismatic *PaRappa The Rapper*, had relied on a standard controller for inputs. While a working concept, the controller never convinced you that you're part of the music.

"I don't think we realised just how much the peripheral would open up the audience," admits Kay. "At the time, having a peripheral bundled with your game was considered something that would limit the audience.

"When you watch someone play *Guitar Hero*, though, you instantly understand that they're playing a guitar game.

You don't have to see anything else about it to instantly 'get' what the game is about. Using the peripheral was more natural than other peripherals have been because, even if you haven't played a guitar before, you know what it is and how to hold it. That became a

huge point for the success of the game."

You didn't have to understand videogames, then, to understand *Guitar Hero*; a point of design brilliance that would open up the game's audience enormously and convince more people than ever before that the medium of videogames had something to offer above and beyond the usual bouts of fighting, shooting and racing.

However, the design of the guitar controller itself was not achieved without a few hiccups. As is natural, perhaps, undertaking new ideas throws up unexpected problems. You might think that adding coloured buttons to a plastic guitar is a simple task, but that's not necessarily the case.

"Due to the time restrictions, there wasn't that much back and forth [between Harmonix and the controller manufacturers], but one example of communication between us came down to the buttons," Kay recalls, going on to explain further. "We asked for the buttons to be ordered: red, orange, yellow, green, blue. Basically, the order that you'd find them in a rainbow.



△OX□ Videogames are not generally associated with busking, but that didn't stop Play's own Luke Albígés...



△OX□ When you first start playing you're limited to performing in small, dingy clubs. As you progress you entertain bigger venues such as concert halls and stadiums.

STANDOUT MOMENT



Mastering American Metal

Surely it's easy to master five little buttons? Wrong

There is still much debate surrounding which *Guitar Hero* tracks are the most difficult, but there's little disagreement that Pantera's *Cowboys From Hell* is a challenge only the most gifted of players should attempt to master.

"*Cowboys From Hell* is incredibly difficult to get five

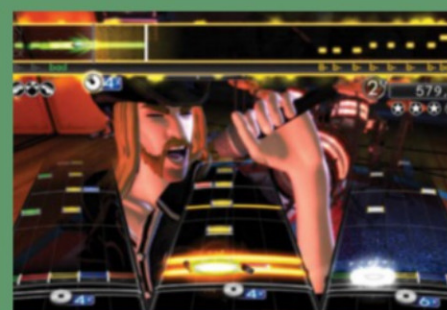
stars on," says Kay. "We couldn't do it ourselves and I had prided myself on getting five stars on everything. We spoke about decreasing the difficulty, but after watching videos of people doing insane things with a guitar we were reminded how good people can get with serious practice."

FURTHER READING



OLDER – Guitar Freaks

Released in Japanese arcades with a three-button instrument in 1998, *Guitar Freaks* laid the foundations for peripheral-based rhythm games.



NEWER – Rock Band

The idea of 'connecting' players with music is taken up a notch in *Rock Band* thanks to a co-op approach that sees players team up as a full band.

"This turned out to be a problem when we got the controller back as people would get confused between colours, mainly because orange and red were next to each other and they would hit the wrong button. The new colour order we used to fix that issue ended up being something very readily associated with *Guitar Hero* and it all came through playtesting."

Playtesting also highlighted the importance of including different difficulty levels and a learning curve that was easy to understand, but difficult to master. It's here that the five buttons came in useful.

"I remember talking to the art director about how many buttons we should have on the guitar controller and he said that we needed five to make sure we can include power-chord style progressions in certain tracks," remembers Kay. "I agreed with that, but it was my job to also make sure that it was accessible to new players and I knew they might struggle with using five buttons."

"That's when we decided to split it up into using just three buttons for Easy, four for Medium and all five on Hard and

Expert difficulty. That structure allows new players to come in and get involved, but you always want to keep that sweet spot of constantly having new things for players to master. That's true for most games, but one of the wonderful parts of *Guitar Hero* was that we had the guitar itself to help play a part in that.

"We were creating an experience in which anyone could feel like they could create rock music and that they felt like they were the guitarist on stage. That priority was always there at the very beginning and influenced every tiny design decision."

One of the most essential parts of making you feel like you were on stage involved including recognisable tracks to play. Unlike future editions of *Guitar Hero*, the original game used cover versions rather than original recordings.

"I wasn't directly involved in the music licensing, but my understanding was that [the use of covers] came down to cost," explains Kay. "To get fully licensed original recordings costs more than your own covers. This was a fairly small budget



project, so we decided to work with the same company Harmonix used to create the *Karaoke Revolution* covers.

"The job they did was so good that I don't think a lot of players noticed that they were covers, so it worked for the experience we were trying to create. If there was one thing that everybody on the team wanted to contribute to it was which songs should be

becoming one of *Guitar Hero's* greatest strengths. Whether you were fan of the fratboy punk-rock beats of Sum 41's *Fat Lip*, the harder notes of Black Sabbath's *Iron Man* or the poetic complexity of Jimi Hendrix's *Spanish Castle Magic*, there was something here for you to enjoy. Perhaps, by engaging more directly in the music, you would develop a new appreciation

"I DON'T THINK A LOT OF PLAYERS NOTICED THAT THEY WERE COVERS"

in the game. There was a group that would get together and debate endlessly on what was going to be included."

Choosing tracks didn't just come down to personal preference, however, as different tracks would invariably be more or less difficult for players to master. Harmonix couldn't, therefore, solely opt for tracks that were made up of complex guitar solos. This gameplay-enforced diversity resulted in the soundtrack

for tracks and bands you had no previous interest in.

That connection is *Guitar Hero's* greatest strength and stands as a brilliant example of a team successfully executing on very focused design goals. "Jimi Hendrix, in a way, was one of our level designers," suggests Kay. "He had already created the experience that you were going to have as a player – we were just connecting you to that kind of wizardry."



FALL FROM GREATNESS

Rob Kay on why the genre's popularity waned

"After *Rock Band* one of the problems I had in my own household was finding space for the peripherals needed to play these games. That physical space requirement was always going to limit the longevity of the genre. It's great to have it all out when you're having a party, but do you want it taking up that space all the time?"

"I also think the genre was over-milked in 2008/2009 and it oversaturated players. I still think the core appeal of connecting people with music in this way remains, though. So I do imagine there will be a revival one day."



INTERVIEW

BACK TO FRONT

Homefront: The Revolution producer
Fasahat Salim discusses resurrecting the
THQ IP on PS4

This is CrytekUK's first solo project. How has that experience been?

It has been really exciting, to be honest. Before we acquired it, we already started working on it with THQ. We'd done about a year's worth of work and then obviously the THQ thing happened. That was a scary time. We didn't know what was happening. We were concerned that we were going to lose a year's worth of work. But then Crytek got the licence for us, which was great. Not only did it save all the work that we did but it gave us the opportunity to expand on what we were doing. Up to that point it was still a level-to-level first-person shooter – that was the structure we had in place. But once we acquired the IP, it allowed us to take the shackles off. We could go as big as wanted to. The thing we wanted to do was create a big free-roaming world. For us it has been really exciting. It has given us a chance to work on a first-person shooter that is very different from a gameplay

perspective – you're not in a Nanosuit, you don't have superpowers, you're not a hardened military soldier. You're a day-to-day guy and you have to do the best you can to take the fight to an enemy that is way, way bigger than you are. It adds a lot of interesting situations and scenarios that we could work on.

Was it back to the drawing board once Crytek obtained the IP?

We had a lot of content that has made it into the free-roam but that was the biggest transition. When it was a level-to-level design, everything was contained to each stage, but when we went to free-roam we have to expand and adapt to this massive world; it needs to cover a whole lot of space and be fun consistently. There was a lot of re-thinking to be done. We did take a lot of the stuff we already worked on. But back to the drawing board? Yeah, we had to change a lot of the design principles. Designing a game as a linear

first-person shooter and then designing a game as an open experience is a completely different kettle of fish.

How is the game world divided up? Is it made up of large, self-contained areas or is it one big map?

We've got no load screens. The world is big, big, big. Fictionally, it is broken down into three different zones. We've got the Red Zone, which is a wasteland – bombed-out houses, a neglected part of town the KPA don't want. It's the closest thing to the Wild West in 2029 Philadelphia. This is [where] a lot of interesting things happen. It's a very expansive space. Then we've got Yellow Zones. This is the main space the KPA are trying to drive the population into. They have given people incentives to move to this area by giving away food rations and things like that. They want to bring as much of the population into these Yellow Zones because it's easier for them

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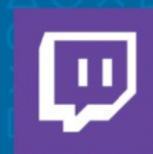
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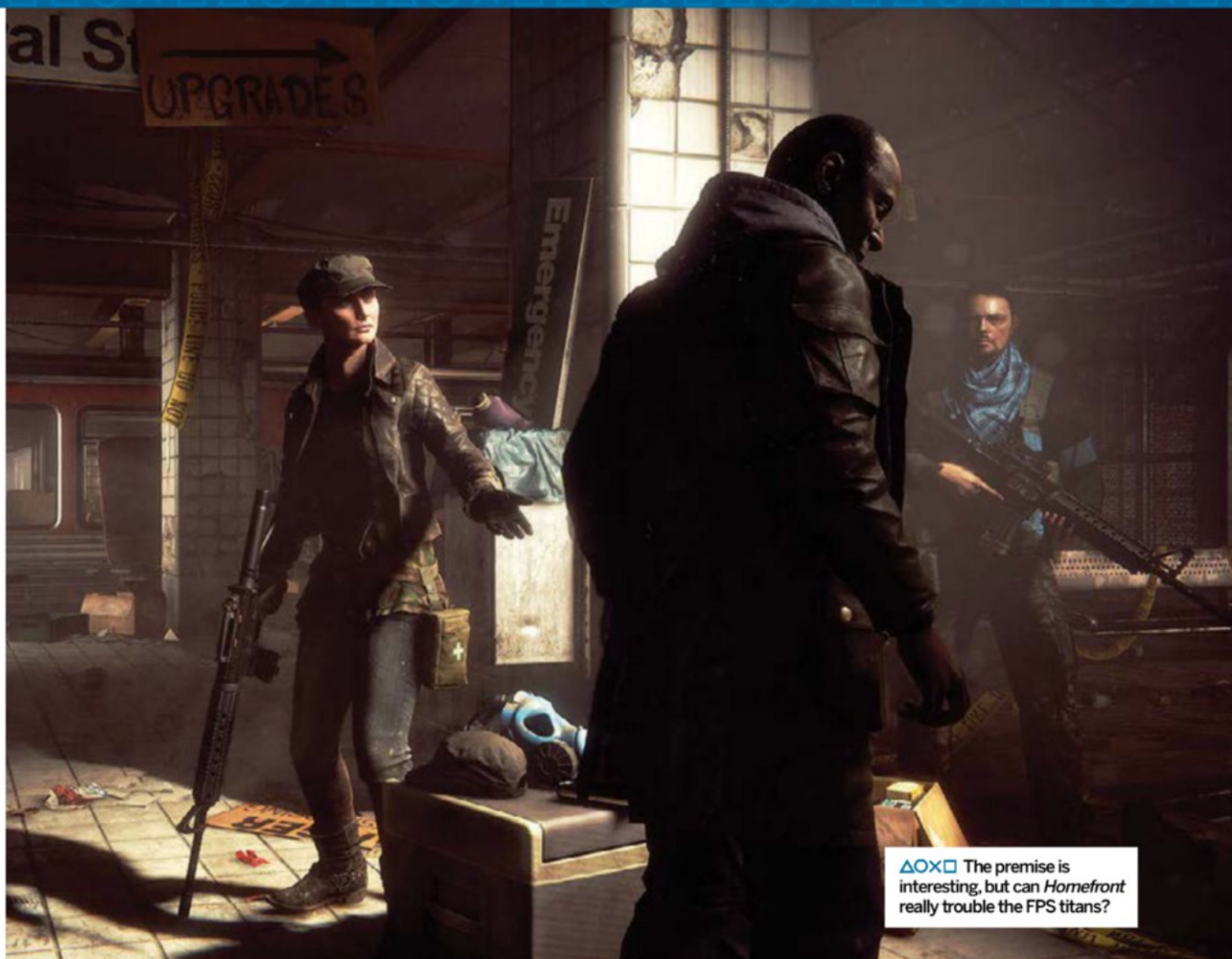
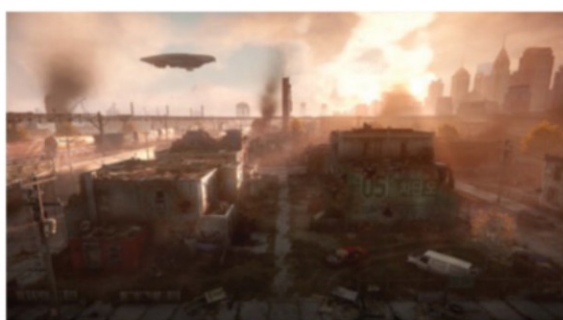
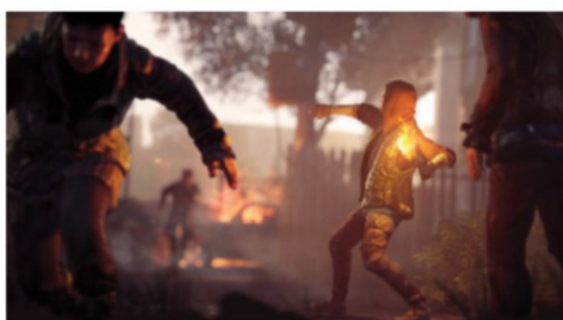
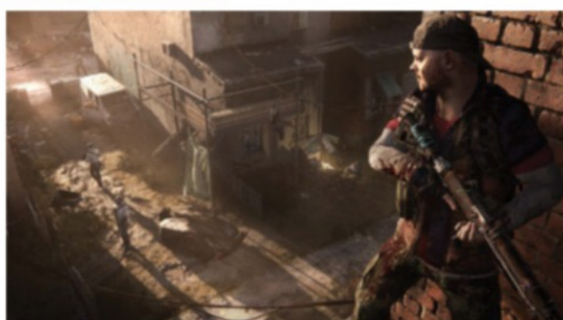
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△×□ The premise is interesting, but can *Homefront* really trouble the FPS titans?

to control and keep an eye on them. They have their drones, they have their watchtowers and their cameras and that's where they can keep an eye on all the population and make sure no one is stepping over the lines. There are several of these Yellow Zones across Philadelphia and they're basically ghettos and these ghettos are all unique, they all have their own personality and style and players will have different experiences throughout these.

As the revolution builds up, are you able to send out lieutenants to tackle objectives elsewhere in the world?

Everything you do in the world has an impact on the revolution. The stuff you do, no matter how small – whether that's smashing a camera or killing a KPA official – will have an impact on the 'uprising level', as we're calling it. The more things you do, the more significant things you do, the more that uprising level rises. Then people will start taking to the streets and that's what you want. You want to do that throughout the whole world to get everyone out on the

streets together. One of the things that happens is that you can actually see the difference on the streets. People start coming out and that impacts the KPA as well because now they have something else to worry about. People are on the street rioting, they're angry and all of a sudden the KPA is distracted – they're worried about the rioters and need to suppress them. That gives you advantages: you can sneak into places and hit the KPA when they're vulnerable. As far as gaining recruits: yes, you do build your resistance, you do recruit people and you expand the resistance. You scavenge the world for materials, you build your equipment, you build your weapons that you use in your fight against the KPA but at the same time you recruit people and expand the resistance by going throughout Philadelphia and trying to get all these different resistance cells. That is how resistance fighters work; they're not a big group but individual cells – your aim is to get them to come together and fight these guys. You have to go to all of the different districts recruiting and inspiring the people.

This seems drastically different to the original concept of *Homefront*. What was the impetus to expand the brand?

We don't see this as a sequel per se. We see it as a different game but we have used that universe because we felt that it was very interesting and unique. If it wasn't for that we wouldn't have had this focus on guerrilla warfare. We looked at what *Homefront* did [well], we know a lot of people enjoyed it. So we wanted to take all of those positive aspects of what *Homefront* offered and take it into the Crytek world and tried to use our experience and the technology we had and expand it and push it as far as we can. We took that guerrilla warfare pillar and built what we were trying to do around that. It came down to the point where everything we were putting into the game mission-wise we were thinking 'how guerrilla is this?' If you feel like the badass marine running around killing people, that's not what we want. We want to make sure the player is getting the guerrilla experience. We've focused and built the game around that principle, and that we got from the original *Homefront*.



With the next game in the series announced as the cops and robbers-themed *Battlefield: Hardline*, many might be thinking that *Battlefield 4*'s time in the sun is over. Not so fast – with millions of players around the world and a bunch of new content on the way, there is still a lot of fun to be had in DICE's latest gun bonanza



DLC

■ **IT WOULDN'T BE** a modern-day FPS without a whole bunch of post-launch DLC in an attempt to sell Season Passes, and *Battlefield 4* is no exception. If you've not played the game since it came out, there is a ton of new content to get stuck into, with a total of five huge DLC packs.

The first of *Battlefield 4*'s DLC packs, *China Rising*, added four new maps, ten new assignments, new vehicles and an entirely

new game type. Each subsequent pack has added at least as much, with *Second Assault* introducing Capture The Flag as well as a bunch of classic maps from *Battlefield 3*, and *Naval Strike* brought dynamic ocean combat to the game with a new Carrier Assault mode inspired by the underrated *Battlefield 2142*.

With two more DLC packs still on the way – *Dragon's Teeth* and *Final Stand* – there is still plenty to look forward to for

hardcore *Battlefield 4* players over the coming months until *Hardline* drops. It's still well worth picking up the Season Pass, as through doing so you'll get access to the three current and two future packs for a reduced price compared to buying them all separately. If you still play the game online, it's pretty much a necessity. How much you have to like it is a different issue, but don't get left behind!



BATTLEFIELD 1943

■ **IF YOU FANCY** mixing things up a bit, why not travel back to where it all began... sort of. The original *Battlefield* game was 1942, a 2002 PC release that changed the landscape of online shooters by introducing huge maps, multiple vehicles and a focus on controlling several capture points. While you can't play 1942 on console, you can play sort-of sequel *Battlefield 1943*, a 2009 PSN release.

1943 is an excellent game, even by *Battlefield*'s high standards. Set in the Pacific Theatre of Operations, the

beautiful maps contrast nicely with the frantic action that is always taking place. This is classic *Battlefield*, with planes soaring overhead, jeeps racing past on land and a bunch of (relatively) authentic World War Two weaponry to fire at the other team. If you fancy a change of pace from the complexities of modern *Battlefield*, the stripped-back approach of 1943 could be just up your street. It always helps to know where you came from if you want to appreciate the future, after all.



COMMANDER MODE

■ **WHAT IS ONE** of our favourite features in *Battlefield 4* is one of the most often forgotten about, it seems – the glorious return of Commander Mode. Last seen in the excellent *Battlefield 2142*, Commander Mode tasks a player with overseeing the ongoing battle by way of a top-down map, lending proceedings more of a strategy game feel.

The Commander can give teammates orders (not that they have to follow them), observe the battle through other player's eyes, deploy vehicle and weapon drops to help their team, order in missile strikes on hostile targets and more. It's a different experience, but a fun and worthwhile one, and a team with a good commander can be at a real advantage. Give it a try.

SINGLE-PLAYER

■ **WE KNOW, PLAYING** *Battlefield* for the single-player is a bit like playing *Grand Theft Auto IV* for the bowling, but bear with us. The campaign in *Battlefield* actually isn't terrible, although to call it anything more than alright is still a stretch. Still, it's far more interesting than the last few years of *Call Of Duty* campaigns, with a fairly lengthy story and a cool score attack mechanic that makes it a bit more than the standard 'follow the man' deal of most FPS games nowadays.

Considering a lot of fans would have jumped straight into online without giving the campaign a second glance, we'd guess there are a fair few fans out there who are yet to even start it despite owning the game for months. It's never anything to write home about, but with an opening that involves a Bonnie Tyler song and a starring role for Omar from *The Wire*, there are at least a few high points.

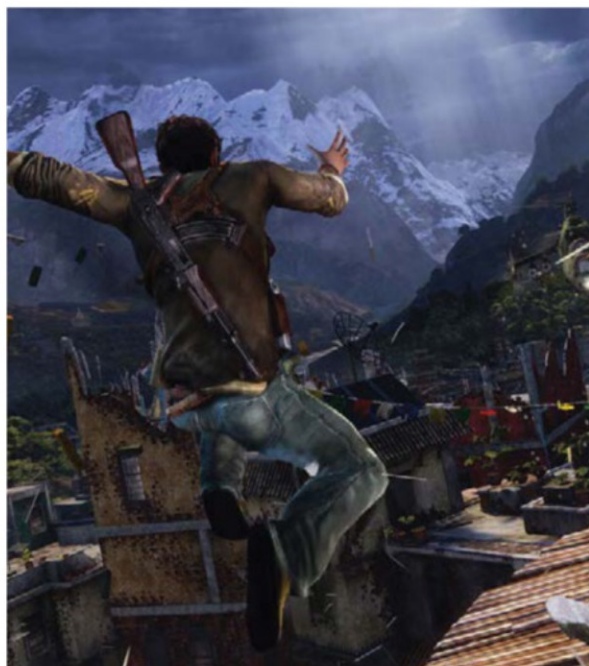
THE BLUFFER'S GUIDE TO UNCHARTED



THE STORY SO FAR

■ **ALL THREE MAIN** *Uncharted* games and the Vita prequel follow the same basic plot – find the mythical artefact before the bad guys do – and knowing the specifics isn't too integral if you're jumping into the series for the first time. The most important plot elements of the games are the character interactions, especially the relationships between Drake and mentor Sully, as well as conflicted love-interest Elena Fisher. Nate and Sully go

way back, first meeting when a teenage Drake attempts to steal Francis Drake's ring from a museum. Meanwhile, Nate first meets journalist Elena in the original *Uncharted*, and the two have shared a tempestuous romantic relationship ever since. While the specifics of the plot in each game isn't necessary to jump in, we recommend familiarising yourself with at least these three main characters to really enjoy their future adventures.



WHERE TO START

■ **THE FIRST UNCHARTED** was a good game, but one that doesn't hold up as well half a decade later. At times it feels like a proof of concept, Naughty Dog dipping a toe in the waters of a new genre and seeing what the temperature was like. If you are trying the franchise for the first time, we recommend starting with *Uncharted 2: Among Thieves*. The second game was the perfect storm of Naughty Dog getting everything just right, achieving exactly what it set out to do with the game.

From that opening train set piece onwards, *Uncharted 2* leads players on a fantastic adventure that perfectly apes the tone of classic adventure serials and films. Never too serious, Drake is full of quips and one-liners while bumbling his way toward the treasure. Of course, he kills a lot of people in the process, but we can overlook this particular tonal inconsistency. By all means, play *Uncharted 3* and the first game also, but bear in mind that the second is the clearly superior title. Try not to be disappointed by the others – they are still great.



WHAT IS IT?

■ **WE FIND IT** hard to believe that any self-respecting PlayStation fan won't be familiar with the *Uncharted* series, but for the sake of being comprehensive, let's start at the beginning. Naughty Dog is arguably the most famous Sony-owned development studio and for good reason: it makes the best games. From *Crash Bandicoot* on PSone through *Jak And Daxter* on PS2, the studio was well versed in fun platformers going into the PS3 era but decided to do something different.

Taking inspiration from the likes of *Indiana Jones* and Saturday-morning adventure serials, Naughty Dog created *Uncharted: Drake's Fortune*. While you could clearly see the platforming lineage, *Uncharted* added a cinematic style and third-person shooting to the mix, as well as one of the last generation's most iconic characters: roguish treasure hunter Nathan Drake.



ANY SPIN-OFFS?

■ **SO KIND OF** you to ask! There have been two other *Uncharted* games aside from the main three, both on Vita. The first, *Uncharted: Golden Abyss*, is a straight adaptation of the series for handheld, with comparable gameplay to the main entries and really, really pretty graphics for such a small machine. A prequel set before the first *Uncharted* game, *Drake's Fortune*, the story itself is once again inconsequential,

serving as a setup for a fun – if occasionally unremarkable – adventure game.

The other is *Uncharted: Fight For Fortune*, a... digital turn-based card game with an *Uncharted* theme. Yeah, it's not what we expected either, and hasn't really been a system seller. If you really, *really* like *Uncharted* then maybe take a look, but otherwise there's little to see here.



ANYTHING BESIDES GAMES?

■ **YUP, YOU'VE GOT** *Uncharted: Eye Of Indra*, a motion comic you can download on PSN. There is also *The Fourth Labyrinth*, an original novel, and a comic book series published by DC Comics. A film adaptation has also been talked about for years, with multiple directions reportedly attached to the troubled project. Watch this space...

WHO ARE THESE GUYS?



NATHAN DRAKE

Nate isn't actually Francis Drake's descendant, but took the name for his own. Master of the fabled half-tuck, Nate is affable and light-hearted, but never afraid to get his hands dirty. His luck is either terrible or incredible, depending on your outlook.



VICTOR SULLIVAN

Sully was once in the Navy, but now serves as Nate's mentor and surrogate father figure. An accomplished treasure hunter in his own right, the two get into various scrapes and adventures but always manage to have each other's backs throughout.



ELENA FISHER

A journalist who meets Drake and Sully in the first game, Elena is more than capable of taking care of herself and helps the two on numerous occasions. Eventually marrying Nate, the two share a complicated, on and off relationship.



CHLOE FRAZER

Another love interest of Nate, Chloe is a fellow treasure hunter who had a relationship with Drake some years ago. While briefly rekindling things in *Uncharted 2*, Chloe's true motivations are hard to read, and she's usually in things for herself.

TROPHY GUIDE

PS PLUS
TROPHY GUIDE

It's a mixed bunch, this PS Plus selection. The PS4 still suffers its expected drought of big name games, but we did get two games this month with PixelJunk Shooter Ultimate (with Cross-Buy for PS Vita) and Trine 2. On PS3, there's NBA 2K14 and Lone Survivor (which is also Cross-Buy), while PS Vita owners got the excellent Dragon's Crown and quirky puzzler Surge Deluxe



PIXELJUNK SHOOTER ULTIMATE

PLATFORM: PS4/VITA **DIFFICULTY:** 2/5 **TROPHIES:** 27 🏆 1 🏆 7 🏆 9 🏆 10

■ **THERE AREN'T MANY** Trophies to collect here, but as a result, there's a pretty easy Platinum to grab. The majority will be unlocked as you play through the game, but you'll also need to find every secret area and treasure, and rescue all the survivors. Then there's a handful of online Trophies that will require playing (and winning) enough to get promoted to the next league – they're easy enough to get with persistence. The only interesting Trophy here, in fact, is 'Double Eleven' – a cheeky inclusion from the developer of the same name, whereby you need to play the game at 11 minutes past 11.



TRINE 2: THE COMPLETE STORY

PLATFORM: PS4 **DIFFICULTY:** 4/5 **TROPHIES:** 51 🏆 1 🏆 3 🏆 5 🏆 42

■ **ON THE PS3** *Trine 2* was one of the easiest Platins to hunt (you didn't even need to finish the game), but on PS4 things have changed quite dramatically. Not only do you have to complete the whole thing (course, you would've done anyway, right?), but with a requirement to complete it on Hardcore difficulty and to find all the chests and experience bottles you'll actually need to try here. Some of the Trophies are the same as the PS3 version, but for the record most of them can be unlocked in Chapter 2 – after the tutorial. The new Trophies can only be unlocked through the *Goblin Menace* DLC, which is included in the *Complete Story* version, but it's only 'Wicked Collection' that will prove a nuisance. You'll need to unlock the monster prison ability for Amodeus, and as soon as you see three goblins (any more can be killed) you should trap each of them. The cages won't be destroyed, but they will begin to rattle the cages, so you need to act as fast as you can to stack them on top of one another. Having a flat place to stack them is necessary here. Otherwise, there isn't much that isn't self-explanatory here.



NBA 2K14

PLATFORM: PS3

DIFFICULTY: 3/5

TROPHIES: 37 1 3 15 18

■ THE PS3 AND PS4 Trophy lists for *NBA 2K14* are different, and though a lot of your objectives will be the same it'll be a pleasure to some of you to hear that the PS3 version doesn't require you to collect all those tedious MyTeam cards. There is a Trophy associated with this – 'From the Ground Up' – but that only requires buying 15 boosters. The list is fairly typical of sports games outside of that: follow the career mode ticking off various win types (make donations, sign sponsor deals) and get made Man of the Match. That sort of thing. There are also Trophies for winning Versus games and for getting 99 stars in LeBron: Path to Greatness mode. It's all pretty obvious, but it will take a good amount of grinding.



LONE SURVIVOR

PLATFORM: PS3/VITA DIFFICULTY: 2/5

TROPHIES: 42 1 3 12 26

■ THOUGH *LONE SURVIVOR* isn't particularly difficult – at least in terms of Trophies – it will take a lot of learning. The Platinum will require seeing five different endings, colour coded for your benefit. First you should aim for the Red Ending (which will likely happen naturally) by playing on Normal mode, killing as much as you can, eat food like rats and cats, stay awake until you're exhausted and eat Red Pills. Your mental state will lower enough for the Red Ending. The White Ending requires the opposite, where you should maintain your mental state – make sure you only eat 'good' food and snacks when you need it. Going for the 'Pacifist' Trophy will also help on this, so make good use of hiding places and flares. If you got the White Ending, click Continue from the main menu on the same save, eat a cooked rat and finish the game again for the Green Ending. The Blue Ending is when your mental state is at average, which can be completed after loading up your White Ending save and killing some monsters, eating crappy food and sleeping when it isn't necessary. Lastly is Yellow Ending, which is unlocked by trying to give every character you meet the Sleepy Cat Plush you can collect from Chie's apartment.



Look deeply into it?
Leave it...

DRAGON'S CROWN

PLATFORM: VITA DIFFICULTY: 3/5

TROPHIES: 49 1 3 7 38

■ IT'S JUST AS well *Dragon's Crown* is as good as it is, because if you want that Platinum Trophy it's going to take you weeks of grinding. You'll need to reach level 99, play and complete the game on three different difficulties as well as finish it with three different classes. Outside of that you'll also need to collect bones, get sent to prison ten times, collect all the Treasure Art, bury 100 NPC bones, offer 100,000 gold to the Priestess and defeat the Ancient Dragon under specific times on each of the three difficulties. Aside from the grind, the only really tricky Trophy is 'Unsullied', whereby you must complete a round without taking damage, but there is an easy way. Complete the Old Capital to unlock the 'Beastmaster' quest; begin this quest in the same area without allies, and there will be sabretooth tigers at the starting area. Using these will allow you to take damage without compromising the Trophy.

SURGE DELUXE

PLATFORM: VITA

DIFFICULTY: 1/5

TROPHIES: 37 0 1 4 12

■ THERE IS NO Platinum here, but the Trophies that are included are simple enough. In fact, all you can do is keep playing the game and check them off one-by-one: you'll need to achieve a combo of 20, a high score of 12 million and explode 10 blocks at once. Just look at the Trophy list; you'll figure out what you need to aim for – just remember that they won't all unlock during Puzzle Mode, so there will be a lot of grinding involved (especially for 'Grinder Man' and the 100,000 blocks exploded). It's unlikely that *Surge Deluxe* will actually maintain your interest for that long, but if it does then at least you'll know that your persistence will be rewarded with a couple of Trophies. Better than nothing, right?



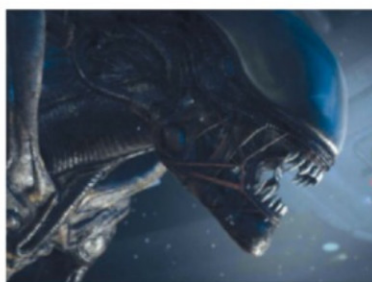
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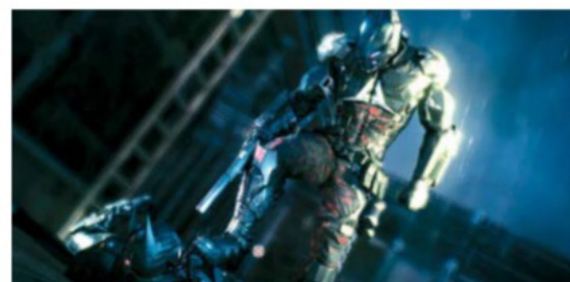
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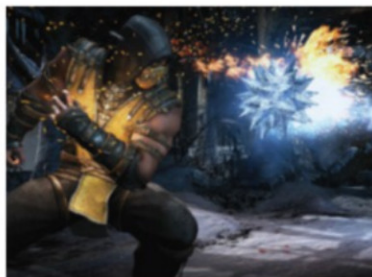
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ALIEN: ISOLATION
TOTAL TERROR?



BATMAN: ARKHAM KNIGHT
DELAYED, BUT IT STILL LOOKS AMAZING



MORTAL KOMBAT X
FINISH HIM!



DRIVECLUB
MOVE OVER, GRAN TURISMO



DARK SOULS II
THREE HUGE PIECES OF DLC ON THE WAY



BLOODBORNE
FROM SOFTWARE'S NEWEST DARK ADVENTURE



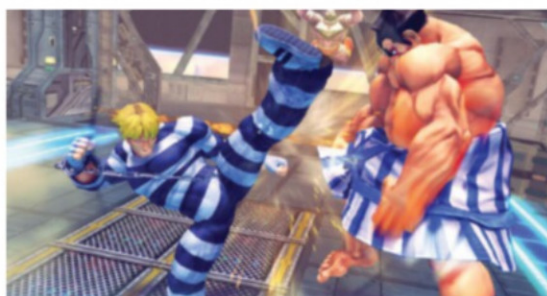
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TOURNAMENTS!

Our regular tournaments continue – normally every fortnight, but keep an eye on our Facebook and Twitter channels for more up-to-date information. The game changes each time, but the reasons for playing don't: free games and other goodies for the best players, every time! Come join in the fun next time and you might even win something neat.



ULTRA STREET FIGHTER IV



Our fighting game this month is the most popular example of the genre in the world, especially now that it has just received a new revision from **Capcom**. Come and watch us beat the crap out of each other in the newest version of *Street Fighter IV*. Don't worry, we won't use Ken.

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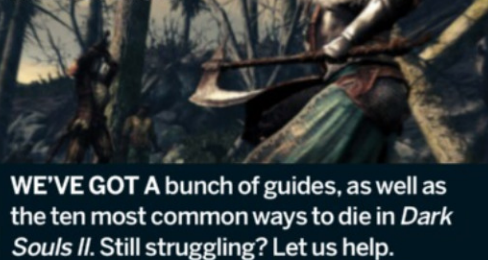
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PLAY'S MOST WANTED PS4 GAMES



WE'VE RANKED THE PS4 games we are most looking forward to. Are your picks in there or are we dead wrong? Get in touch and let us know!

DARK SOULS II



WE'VE GOT A bunch of guides, as well as the ten most common ways to die in *Dark Souls II*. Still struggling? Let us help.

TRANSISTOR



THE NEW GAME from *Bastion* creator Supergiant is beautiful to look at, but is it fun to play? Find out in our video review.

INFAMOUS: SECOND SON



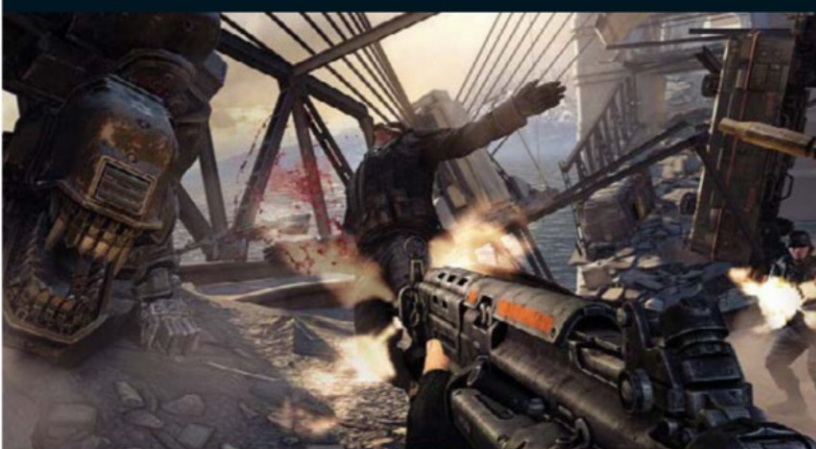
STILL HAVING TROUBLE squeezing out those last few Trophies We've got a handy guide to the five most difficult ones.

BOUND BY FLAME



THE FIRST RPG on PS4 – does it set a trend or is it best left forgotten? Find out in our exclusive video review.

WOLFENSTEIN: THE NEW ORDER

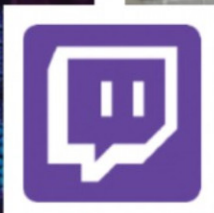


WHAT DO WE think of the newest *Wolfenstein* game, *The New Order*? Take a look at our exclusive video review and see if this old-school FPS is worth your time.



TOWERFALL ASCENSION

This multiplayer arena game has been a **Play favourite since it first came out**. Watch in awe as we leap around and pepper one another with arrows, and don't forget to tell us how terrible we all are at games in the chat box. That seems to be what it's for.



RETRO STUFF

We've got a bunch of old games stuffed away in a massive cupboard that we dig out occasionally and stream for a blast of nostalgia. Fancy seeing us get frustrated with *Enter The Matrix*, or tackling *Rugby 2002*? You know what to do.

SHARING



PS4: THE COMPLETE MANUAL

If a monthly dose of **Play** isn't enough, check out Imagine Publishing's new bookazine, **PS4 The Complete Manual**. It's a guide to your new console, from basic stuff through to advanced tips, along with a verdict on every game currently available. Pick it up for only £7.99 in any good mag retailer, or order one from greatdigitalmags.com.



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PLAY+ PLUS PlayList

IF YOU WANT TO KNOW WHAT A GAME SCORED THEN THESE PAGES ARE FOR YOU

TEAM PICKS PS2 GAMES



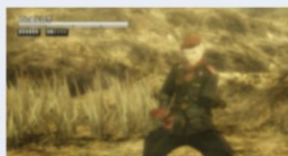
top five LUKE ALBIGÉS

- 1 Devil May Cry 3: Dante's Awakening
- 2 Virtua Fighter 4 Evolution
- 3 Amplitude
- 4 Kingdom Hearts II
- 5 Burnout 3: Takedown



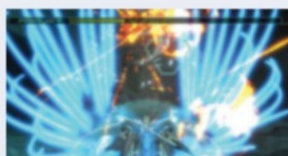
top five LIAM WARR

- 1 Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas
- 2 Stuntman
- 3 WWF Smackdown: Just Bring It!
- 4 Tony Hawk's Underground
- 5 Pro Evolution Soccer 6



top five STEVE HOLMES

- 1 Metal Gear Solid 3: Snake Eater
- 2 Grand Theft Auto: Vice City
- 3 Metal Gear Solid 2: Sons Of Liberty
- 4 Tony Hawk's Underground
- 5 From Russia With Love



top five SAM SMITH

- 1 Zone Of The Enders 2
- 2 Metal Gear Solid 3: Snake Eater
- 3 Final Fantasy X
- 4 Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3
- 5 Grand Theft Auto: Vice City

PS4 LISTING



GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
Assassin's Creed IV: Black Flag	237	83%
Battlefield 4	238	80%
Bound By Flame	245	62%
Call Of Duty: Ghosts	238	75%
Child Of Light	244	79%
Daylight	245	20%
Dead Nation: Apocalypse Edition	242	74%
Don't Starve	240	81%
inFamous: Second Son	242	86%
Killzone Shadow Fall	238	80%
Knack	238	55%
Lego Marvel Super Heroes	238	85%
Lego The Hobbit	244	65%
Mercenary Kings	244	85%
Metal Gear Solid V: Ground Zeroes	242	85%
Need For Speed Rivals	238	83%
Octodad: Dadliest Catch	244	60%
Outlast	241	73%
Resogun	238	91%



An addictive and accomplished shoot-'em-up, *Resogun* is an indie delight and a surprise PS4 launch highlight. Awesome stuff.

Skylanders Swap Force	238	77%
The Amazing Spider-Man 2	245	25%
Thief	241	70%
Tiny Brains	240	68%
Transistor	245	87%
Trials Fusion	244	80%
War Thunder	239	80%
Watch Dogs	245	80%
Wolfenstein: The New Order	245	78%

PS3 LISTING



007 Legends	225	44%
1942: Joint Strike	170	74%
2014 FIFA World Cup Brazil	244	69%
3-On-3 NHL Arcade	177	62%
3D Dot Game Heroes	192	87%
50 Cent: Blood On The Sand	177	70%
Ace Combat: Assault Horizon	211	78%
The Adventures Of Tintin	212	58%
Afro Samurai	177	61%
After Burner Climax	193	91%
Agarest: Generations Of War	187	78%
Agarest: Generations Of War 2	223	43%
Agarest: Generations Of War Zero	209	52%
Age Of Booty	172	81%
Air Conflicts: Secret Wars	208	58%
Alice: Madness Returns	207	57%
Alien Breed: Impact	196	80%
Alien Breed 2: Assault	201	82%
Alien Breed 3: Descent	204	61%
Aliens: Colonial Marines	230	45%
Aliens Vs Predator	189	79%
All Zombies Must Die!	214	64%
Alone In The Dark	173	70%
Alpha Protocol	193	83%
Amy	215	19%
Anarchy: Rush Hour	194	73%
Ape Escape	208	55%
Aquapazza: Aquaplus Dream Match	239	70%
Aqua Panic	193	68%
Arcana Heart 3	207	79%
Armageddon Riders	207	65%
Armored Core: For Answer	173	65%
Armored Core 4	153	67%
Armored Core V	217	60%

GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
Army Of Two	164	80%
Army Of Two: The 40th Day	188	65%
Army Of Two: The Devil's Cartel	231	44%
Ar Tonelico Qoga: Knell Of Ar Ciel	203	27%
Assassin's Creed	161	58%
Assassin's Creed II	186	89%
Assassin's Creed III	225	78%
Assassin's Creed: Brotherhood	199	91%
Assassin's Creed: Revelations	212	75%
Asura's Wrath	216	67%
Atelier Ayesha: The Alchemist Of Dust	230	60%
Atelier Rorona: The Alchemist Of Arland	198	77%
Backbreaker	193	70%
Back To The Future: It's About Time	204	71%
The Baconing	210	72%
Band Hero	187	68%
Batman: Arkham Asylum	183	85%
Batman: Arkham City	211	94%
Batman: Arkham Origins	237	85%
Battle Fantasia	176	67%
Battlefield 1943	182	89%
Battlefield: Bad Company	168	78%
Battlefield: Bad Company 2	190	93%
Battlefield 3	212	88%
Battleship	219	44%
Bayonetta*	187	93%
The Beatles: Rock Band	184	96%
Beat Hazard Ultra	213	79%
Beat Skechter	201	85%
Beowulf	161	61%
Beyond Good & Evil HD	207	86%
Beyond: Two Souls	236	70%
Binary Domain	216	70%
Bionic Commando	179	82%
Bionic Commando Rearmed	169	88%
Bionic Commando Rearmed 2	203	61%
BioShock	172	93%
BioShock 2	189	88%
BioShock Infinite	230	97%
Birds Of Steel	217	55%
BlackSite	163	43%
Blacklight: Tango Down	200	64%
Blade Kitten	197	72%
Bladestorm: The Hundred Years' War	160	58%
Blast Factor	152	72%
BlazBlue: Calamity Trigger	190	85%
BlazBlue: Continuum Shift	198	94%
Blazing Angels	151	54%
Bleach: Soul Resurrección	209	63%
Blitz: The League II	172	67%
Blokus	202	54%
BloodRayne: Betrayal	211	62%
Blur	193	86%
Bodycount	210	54%
Bomberman Ultra	185	82%
Borderlands	185	80%
Borderlands 2	223	90%



Borderlands 2 is an excellent lesson in sequel-making and is easily one of 2012's best games.


The Bourne Conspiracy	168	72%
Braid	188	93%
Brink	206	67%
Brothers: A Tale Of Two Sons	233	83%
Brothers In Arms: Hell's Highway	171	75%
Brütal Legend	185	79%
Bulletstorm	203	86%
The Bureau: XCOM Declassified	235	57%
Burnout Crash	211	79%
Burnout Paradise	162	74%
Burn Zombie Burn	178	85%
Buzz! Quiz TV	168	82%
Buzz! Quiz World	185	70%
Calling All Cars	155	81%
Call Of Duty 3	151	77%
Call Of Duty: World At War	173	68%
Call Of Duty 4: Modern Warfare	160	88%
Call Of Duty: Modern Warfare 2	186	94%



GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
Call Of Duty: Modern Warfare 3	212	88%
Call Of Duty: Black Ops	199	94%
Call Of Duty: Black Ops II	226	80%
Call Of Juarez: Bound In Blood	181	85%
Call Of Juarez: Gunslinger	232	80%
Call Of Juarez: The Cartel	208	30%
Captain America: Super Soldier	208	70%
Castle Crashers	200	88%
Castlevania: Harmony Of Despair	212	67%
Castlevania: Lords Of Shadow	197	85%
Castlevania: Lords Of Shadow 2	241	81%
Carnival Island	213	53%
Catan	195	85%
Cars 2	208	68%
The Cave	230	77%
Catherine	215	61%
Champion Jockey	210	50%
Chronicles Of Riddick: Assault On Dark Athena	178	87%
Child Of Eden	211	80%
Chime Super Deluxe	203	80%
Civilization Revolution	168	90%
Clash Of The Titans	193	65%
Clive Barker's Jericho	159	84%
The Club	163	80%
Colin McRae: DiRT	158	91%
Colin McRae: DiRT 2	184	87%
Command & Conquer: Red Alert 3	178	65%
Commander's Challenge	185	68%
Command & Conquer	175	44%
Comet Crash	186	84%
Comix Zone	210	62%
Conan	160	71%
Condemned 2	165	78%
Costume Quest	199	70%
Conflict: Denied Ops	164	50%
Counter Strike: Global Offensive	223	89%
Crash Commando	174	80%
Crash Time 4: The Syndicate	218	37%
Crazy Machines Elements	210	71%
Create	199	71%
Crescent Pale Mist	200	70%
Critter Crunch	188	91%
Cross Edge	182	59%
Crystal Defenders	184	48%
Crysis 2	204	72%
Crysis 3	230	61%
Cubixx HD	207	76%
The Cursed Crusade	211	40%
Damnation	181	38%
Damage Inc: Pacific Squadron WWII	223	37%
Dance Dance Revolution	201	52%
Danganronpa: Trigger Happy Havoc	242	85%
Dante's Inferno	189	80%
Dark Mist	164	53%
The Darkness	154	91%
The Darkness II	215	76%
Dark Sector	165	62%
Dark Souls	211	90%
Dark Souls II	242	90%
Darkstalkers Resurrection	230	82%
Dark Void	188	81%
Darksiders	188	83%
Darksiders II	221	86%
DC Universe Online	202	80%
de Blob 2	203	65%
Dead Or Alive 5	223	78%
Dead Island	210	79%
Dead Island: Riptide	231	65%
Dead Rising 2	197	78%
Dead Rising 2: Off The Record	211	61%
Dead Space	172	87%
Dead Space 2	201	92%
Dead Space 3	228	70%
Dead Space: Extraction	203	88%
Dead Space: Ignition	199	47%
Dead To Rights: Retribution	192	68%
Deadly Premonition: The Director's Cut	231	82%
Dead Nation	201	86%

THIS MONTH'S NEW ENTRIES

The newest games, freshly squeezed among all your old favourites

Watch Dogs	80%
Wolfenstein: The New Order	78%
Bound By Flame	62%
Daylight	20%
Transistor	87%
The Amazing Spider-Man 2	25%
MLB: The Show 14	90%

GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
Deadpool	233	60%
DeathSpank	195	83%
Def Jam: Icon	151	79%
Def Jam Rapstar	199	72%
Defiance	231	50%
Demon's Souls	193	92%
Destroy All Humans!: Path Of The Furon	178	29%
Derrick The Deathfin	227	79%
Deus Ex: Human Revolution	209	91%
Devil May Cry 4	163	89%
Devil May Cry HD Collection	217	80%
Diablo III	235	89%
Digger HD	186	52%
DIRT 3	206	85%
DIRT Showdown	219	84%
Disgaea 3: Absence Of Justice	175	81%
Dishonored	224	92%
Disney Infinity	235	81%
DJ Hero	186	91%
DJ Hero 2	198	88%
Doctor Who: The Eternity Clock	220	32%
Doom 3: BFG Edition	225	69%
Double Dragon Neon	224	37%
DmC Devil May Cry	227	93%
 <p>DmC injects new life into one of the best genres in all of gaming, and does so with a style and confidence that elevates it beyond its roots.</p>		
Dragon Age: Origins	186	82%
Dragon Age II	203	86%
Dragon Ball: Raging Blast	186	40%
Dragon Ball Z: Burst Limit	168	61%
Dragon's Crown	235	87%
Driver: San Francisco	209	68%
Droplitz	184	91%
Duke Nukem Forever	207	33%
Dungeons & Dragons: Chronicles Of Mystara	233	80%
Dungeon Siege III	206	80%
Dust 514	233	51%
Dynasty Warriors: Gundam	160	40%
Dynasty Warriors: Gundam 2	176	43%
Dynasty Warriors: Gundam 3	208	56%
Dynasty Warriors: Strikeforce	189	37%
Dynasty Warriors 6	164	30%
Dynasty Warriors 6: Empires	181	44%
Dynasty Warriors 7	204	32%
Dynasty Warriors 7: Empires	230	40%
Dynasty Warriors 8	234	71%
Earthworm Jim HD	196	89%
EA Sports Active 2	200	81%
EA Sports Grand Slam Tennis	215	75%
EA Sports MMA	198	89%
Eat Lead	178	38%
Eat Them!	202	60%
echochrome	169	85%
echochrome II	202	83%
EDF: Insect Armageddon	208	64%
The Elder Scrolls IV: Oblivion	152	91%
The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim	212	93%
Elefunk	170	45%
El Shaddai: Ascension Of The Metatron	208	77%
Enchanted Arms	152	69%
Enemy Territory: Quake Wars	168	60%
Enslaved: Odyssey To The West	197	83%
Epic Mickey 2: The Power Of Two	226	55%
Eternal Sonata	176	87%
Eufhoria	212	85%
Everybody's Golf 5	158	88%
Everybody's Golf: World Tour	165	91%
Explodemon	203	70%
Eye Of Judgment	159	65%
EyePet	185	83%
F1 2010	197	86%
F1 2011	211	71%
F1 2012	223	79%
F1 Race Stars	226	61%
FaceBreaker	170	55%
Fairytale Fights	186	51%
Fallout 3	173	97%

GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
Fallout: New Vegas	198	88%
Family Guy: Back To The Multiverse	227	40%
Fantastic Four: Rise Of The Silver Surfer	155	39%
Far Cry 2	172	74%
Far Cry 3	226	88%
Far Cry 3: Blood Dragon	231	85%
Fat Princess	183	65%
Fatal Inertia EX	168	65%
FEAR	151	81%
FEAR 2: Project Origin	176	87%
FEAR 3	208	60%
FIFA 10	184	90%
FIFA 11	197	91%
FIFA 12	210	86%
FIFA 13	223	82%
FIFA 14	236	90%
FIFA Street (2012)	217	74%
FIFA Street 3	163	66%
Final Fight: Double Impact	193	90%
The Fight	199	42%
Fight Night Champion	203	88%
Fight Night Round 3	151	87%
Fight Night Round 4	181	84%
Final Fantasy XIV: A Realm Reborn	236	81%
Final Fantasy XIII	190	85%
Final Fantasy XIII-2	214	80%
Final Fantasy XIII: Lightning Returns	240	80%
Fist Of The North Star: Ken's Rage	198	51%
Fist Of The North Star: Ken's Rage 2	230	58%
Flight Control HD	198	85%
Flock!	179	70%
Folklore	158	66%
Formula One Championship Edition	151	72%
Fracture	171	72%
Front Mission Evolved	198	52%
Frogger: Hyper Arcade Edition	221	55%
From Dust	211	82%
Fuel	180	49%
Full Auto 2: Battlelines	151	69%
Fuse	232	73%
G-Force	183	59%
Game Of Thrones	220	39%
Gatling Gears	207	62%
Genji: Days Of The Blade	151	38%
Ghost Recon Advanced Warfighter 2	157	83%
Ghost Recon Future Soldier	219	60%
Ghostbusters: The Videogame	180	80%
GI Joe	183	22%
The Godfather	151	37%
The Godfather II	178	38%
God Of War III	190	88%
God Of War: Ascension	230	90%
 <p>With brilliantly reworked combat mechanics and stunning graphics, Ascension is a gloriously violent prequel to the series.</p>		
God Of War Collection*	188	93%
God Of War Collection: Volume II	210	70%
The Golden Compass	162	32%
GoldenEye 007: Reloaded	213	63%
Gotham City Imposters	216	78%
Gran Turismo 5	200	85%
Gran Turismo 6	239	83%
Grand Theft Auto IV	166	98%
Grand Theft Auto V	236	97%
 <p>Rockstar's latest is a masterpiece; the perfect swansong for the generation and a wonderful addition to the franchise.</p>		
Greed Corp	191	75%
Greg Hastings Paintball 2	219	22%
Grid 2	232	79%
Green Day: Rock Band	194	77%
GTI Club+	174	72%
GTA: Episodes From Liberty City	191	94%
Guardians Of Middle-earth	227	71%
Guitar Hero III	160	90%
Guitar Hero 5	184	81%
Guitar Hero: Aerosmith	168	63%
Guitar Hero Greatest Hits	182	76%

GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
Guitar Hero Metallica	179	88%
Guitar Hero: Van Halen	189	65%
Guitar Hero: Warriors Of Rock	197	71%
Guitar Hero World Tour	173	95%
Gundemonium Collection	197	80%
Gunstar Heroes	181	85%
Hamsterball	194	72%
Harry Potter And The Deathly Hallows: Part 1	200	21%
Harry Potter And The Deathly Hallows: Part 2	208	37%
Harry Potter And The Half-Blood Prince	182	60%
Harry Potter And The Order Of The Phoenix	155	32%
Haze	167	64%
Heavenly Sword	157	71%
Heavy Rain	189	94%
Heavy Weapon	187	75%
Heroes Over Europe	184	48%
Hitman: Absolution	225	93%
Hitman HD Trilogy	230	75%
Homefront	203	69%
The House Of The Dead 4	218	82%
The House Of The Dead: Overkill	212	75%
Hunted: The Demon's Forge	207	59%
Hustle Kings	190	87%
Hyperdimension Neptunia	202	21%
I Am Alive	217	64%
Ico & Shadow Of The Colossus HD	210	94%
IL-2 Sturmovik: Birds Of Prey	183	72%
The Incredible Hulk	168	52%
inFamous	180	81%
inFamous 2	207	83%
Inferno Pool	181	81%
Injustice: Gods Among Us	231	80%
International Cricket 2010	194	61%
Inversion	220	49%
Invincible Tiger: The Legend Of Han Tao	185	70%
Iron Man	166	58%
Iron Man 2	193	50%
The Jak And Daxter Trilogy	216	82%
Jak And Daxter: The Lost Frontier	187	59%
James Bond 007: Blood Stone	199	63%
James Cameron's Avatar: The Game	187	64%
JASF: Jane's Advanced Strike Fighters	217	30%
JoJo's Bizarre Adventure: All Star Battle	244	80%
Journey	216	87%
Juiced 2: Hot Import Nights	159	78%
Jurassic Park: The Game	194	60%
Just Cause 2	190	87%
Kane & Lynch: Dead Men	160	73%
Kane & Lynch 2: Dog Days	196	71%
Katamari Forever	184	88%
Kick-Ass The Game	194	60%
Killer Is Dead	235	75%
Killzone HD	225	65%
Killzone 2	176	93%
Killzone 3	202	80%
Kingdom Hearts HD 1.5 ReMIX	236	80%
Kingdoms Of Amalur: Reckoning	215	70%
The King Of Fighters XII	182	82%
The King Of Fighters XIII	213	76%
Knights Contract	202	53%
Kung-Fu Live	201	42%
Kung Fu Panda 2	207	20%
Kung Fu Rider	196	65%
Lair	158	52%
Landit Bandit	195	66%
LA Noire	206	91%
Lara Croft And The Guardian Of Light	198	90%
The Last Guy	171	91%
Last Rebellion	191	42%
Lead And Gold: Gangs Of The Wild West	193	65%
Legend Of Spyro: Dawn Of The Dragon	174	54%
Legendary	173	62%
Lego Batman	173	65%
Lego Batman 2	221	80%
Lego Harry Potter: Years 1-4	194	79%
Lego Harry Potter: Years 5-7	213	67%
Lego Indiana Jones: The Original Adventures	167	73%
Lego Indiana Jones 2: The Adventure Continues	187	71%

*denotes import review

TOP TEN PS3 OPEN WORLD GAMES



1 Red Dead Redemption



2 Grand Theft Auto V



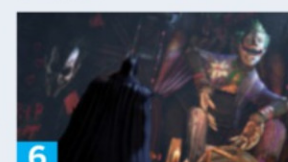
3 The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim



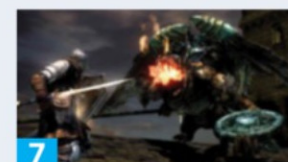
4 Saints Row IV



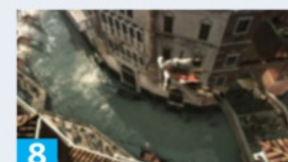
5 Fallout 3



6 Batman: Arkham City



7 Dark Souls



8 Assassin's Creed II



9 Sleeping Dogs



10 Deadly Premonition: Director's Cut

PLAY'S BEST GAMES IF YOU LOVE...



MARIOKART PLAY: CRASH TEAM RACING

The closest thing to *Mario Kart* we're going to get on a Sony console, the first *Crash Team Racing* game still holds up really well today and is an excellent kart racer.



LEGO PLAY: FINAL FANTASY VII

Yes, yes, *Lego* games exist, but the character models in *Final Fantasy VII* (at least in the overworld) are made up of blocky polygons that look just like those plastic bricks.



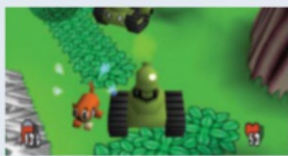
THE SPICE GIRLS PLAY: SPICE WORLD

Yep, this was a thing. A thing best forgotten, but if for some reason you can't get enough of the mouthy Nineties girl band supreme, they had a PSone game. Try it, if you dare.






CRAZINESS PLAY: BISHI BASHI SPECIAL

A collection of mini-games that makes *Wario Ware* look normal, *Bishi Bashi Special* holds a dear place in our hearts. We would really appreciate a sequel, please.




SWEARING
PLAY: TEAM BUDDIES
Team Buddies was a pretty strange game where you controlled little men who looked quite a lot like pills and made them kill each other. They swore. Like, a lot.

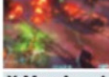
GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
Lego Pirates Of The Caribbean	206	76%
Lego Rock Band	187	75%
Lego Star Wars: The Complete Saga	160	76%
Lego Star Wars III: The Clone Wars	204	79%
Lego: The Lord Of The Rings	227	85%
Leisure Suit Larry: Box Office Bust	180	24%
Limbo	209	90%
LittleBigPlanet	172	94%
LittleBigPlanet 2	201	96%
LittleBigPlanet: Karting	225	85%
LocoRoco Cocoreccho!	159	80%
Lollipop Chainsaw	221	72%
London 2012	221	45%
The Lord Of The Rings: Aragorn's Quest	199	60%
The Lord Of The Rings: Conquest	175	52%
The Lord Of The Rings: War In The North	213	42%
Lost Planet 2	192	75%
Lost Planet 3	236	58%
Lost Planet: Extreme Condition	163	69%
Lost: The Video Game	164	38%
Lumines Supernova	178	90%
Madagascar 3	224	39%
Madden NFL 12	209	85%
Madden NFL 13	223	86%
Madden NFL Arcade	188	58%
Mad Riders	220	70%
Mafia II	196	81%
MAG	189	68%
Magic: Duels Of The Planeswalker	202	84%
Magic: Duels Of The Planeswalker 2012	208	70%
Majin And The Forsaken Kingdom	199	72%
Marvel Vs Capcom 2	182	90%
Marvel Vs Capcom 3	202	88%
Marvel Ultimate Alliance	151	64%
Marvel Ultimate Alliance 2	185	57%
Max Payne 3	219	77%
Mass Effect 2	201	97%
Mass Effect 3	216	93%
Medal Of Honor	198	86%
Medal Of Honor Airborne	161	85%
Medal Of Honor: Warfighter	225	72%
Mega Man 9	172	75%
Mega Man 10	192	82%
Mercenaries 2: World In Flames	171	78%
Metal Gear Rising: Revengeance	228	91%
 Metal Gear Rising: Revengeance is another world-class entry in gaming's most fundamentally playable genre.		
Metal Gear Solid 4	167	92%
Metal Gear Solid HD Collection	214	91%
Metro: Last Light	231	60%
Michael Jackson: The Experience	205	58%
Microbot	202	51%
Midnight Club: Los Angeles	173	84%
Mindjack	202	38%
Minecraft	240	93%
Mini Ninjas	184	80%
Mirror's Edge	173	71%
MLB: The Show 14	245	90%
ModNation Racers	192	90%
Monkey Island 2: Special Edition	195	94%
Monster Madness	170	78%
Mortal Kombat	205	81%
Mortal Kombat Vs DC Universe	173	68%
MotoGP 10/11	204	64%
MotoGP 13	233	74%
Motorhead	173	60%
MotorStorm	151	92%
MotorStorm: Apocalypse	203	76%
MotorStorm: Pacific Rift	172	93%
Mud: FIM Motocross Championship	217	50%
MX Vs ATV Alive	206	42%
MX Vs ATV Reflex	189	68%
MX Vs ATV Untamed	164	58%
naïf'd	201	61%
Namco Museum Essentials	193	60%
Naruto: Ultimate Ninja Storm	174	59%
Naruto Shippuden: UNS Generations	217	53%
Naruto Shippuden: UNS 3	230	85%
Naughty Bear	195	64%
NBA 2K12	211	88%
NBA 2K13	224	88%
NBA Jam	200	68%
NBA Live 09	170	81%
NBA Street: Homecourt	151	68%
Need For Speed Carbon	151	76%
Need For Speed: Hot Pursuit	199	91%

GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
Need For Speed: Most Wanted	225	95%
 Need For Speed: Most Wanted is easily the best arcade racer of this generation. We absolutely love it.		
Need For Speed ProStreet	161	86%
Need For Speed Shift	184	81%
Need For Speed: The Run	213	63%
Need For Speed Undercover	173	75%
NeverDead	215	39%
Nier	192	54%
Ni No Kuni: Wrath Of The White Witch	227	85%
NHL 10	184	85%
NHL 11	198	89%
NHL 12	210	78%
NHL 13	223	74%
NIGHTS Into Dreams...	224	75%
Ninja Gaiden Sigma	154	88%
Ninja Gaiden Sigma 2	184	82%
Ninja Gaiden 3	217	63%
Ninja Gaiden 3: Razor's Edge	231	80%
Noby Noby Boy	177	85%
No More Heroes: Heroes' Paradise	206	89%
Nucleus	155	82%
Numblast	183	60%
Okami HD	225	90%
One Piece: Pirate Warriors	224	69%
Operation Flashpoint: Dragon Rising	185	78%
Operation Flashpoint: Red River	205	75%
The Orange Box	161	93%
Outland	207	72%
OutRun Online Arcade	180	80%
Overlord: Raising Hell	167	65%
Overlord II	181	68%
Pac-Man Championship Edition DX	201	91%
Pain	183	69%
Payday: The Heist	213	88%
Payday 2	235	79%
Peggle	189	94%
Persona 4 Arena	231	91%
 Essential for both Persona fans and fighting game enthusiasts. Persona 4 Arena is an absolute joy to play.		
PES 2010	185	72%
PES 2011	197	73%
PES 2012	210	74%
Pinballistik	215	75%
PixelJunk 4am	220	40%
PixelJunk Eden	169	67%
PixelJunk Shooter	187	93%
PixelJunk Shooter 2	204	90%
PixelJunk SideScroller	213	77%
Phineas & Ferb: Across The 2nd Dimension	211	66%
PixelJunk Racers	160	74%
Piyotama	162	62%
Planet Minigolf	196	58%
PlayStation All-Stars Battle Royale	225	80%
PlayStation Move Heroes	204	54%
Poker Night 2	232	55%
POTC: At World's End	154	48%
Port Royale 3: Pirates & Merchants	224	54%
Portal 2	205	95%
Prince Of Persia	174	83%
Prince Of Persia: Classic	173	67%
Prince Of Persia: The Forgotten Sands	193	68%
Prince Of Persia Trilogy	200	88%
Prison Break: The Conspiracy	191	40%
Prototype	181	76%
Prototype 2	219	75%
Puddle	216	76%
The Punisher: No Mercy	182	49%
Puppeteer	236	70%
Pure	171	80%
Pure Football	194	69%
Puzzle Chronicles	194	70%
Puzzle Dimensions	208	81%
Puzzle Quest Galactrix	181	68%
Quantum Conundrum	221	90%
Quantum Of Solace	175	57%
Quantum Theory	197	29%
Race Driver: GRID	167	85%
Ratchet & Clank: Q-Force	227	52%
Racket Sports	198	37%
Rag Doll Kung-Fu: Fists Of Plastic	179	83%
Rage	211	60%
Rainbow Moon	221	68%
Rainbow Six Vegas	155	88%
Rainbow Six Vegas 2	164	78%

GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
Rango	203	54%
Ratchet & Clank: A Crack In Time	186	82%
Ratchet & Clank: All 4 One	211	68%
Ratchet & Clank: Tools Of Destruction	160	72%
Ratchet & Clank Trilogy HD	221	88%
Rayman Legends	235	83%
Rayman Origins	212	80%
Red Dead Redemption	193	92%
Red Faction: Armageddon	207	62%
Red Faction: Guerrilla	180	80%
Remember Me	232	61%
Renegade Ops	211	78%
Resident Evil Chronicles HD Collection	221	82%
Resident Evil Code Veronica X	211	72%
Resident Evil: Operation Raccoon City	217	33%
Resident Evil: Revelations HD	232	71%
Resident Evil 4 HD	210	93%
Resident Evil 5	177	86%
Resident Evil 6	223	88%
Resistance: Fall Of Man	151	83%
Resistance 2	173	90%
Resistance 3	210	88%
Resonance Of Fate	191	79%
Retro City Rampage	228	78%
Revenge Of The Wounded Dragons	191	60%
Ridge Racer 7	151	75%
Ridge Racer Unbounded	217	67%
Riff: Everyday Shooter	162	86%
Rise Of The Argonauts	176	58%
Risen 2: Dark Waters	222	64%
Risk: Factions	202	80%
Rock Band Blitz	223	80%
Rock Band	169	94%
Rock Band 2	179	96%
Rock Band 3	199	84%
Rocksmith	223	78%
Rogue Warrior	188	09%
Rugby World Cup 2011	209	49%
Rune Factory Oceans	220	51%
RUSE	197	82%
The Saboteur	187	67%
Sacred 2: Fallen Angel	180	76%
Saints Row 2	172	79%
Saints Row: The Third	211	88%
SBK Generations	220	51%
Saint Seiya: Sanctuary Battle	216	52%
Sam & Max: The Devil's Playground Ep1	194	90%
Sam & Max: The Devil's Playground Ep2	194	92%
Savage Moon	175	87%
Saw	186	52%
Saw II: Flesh & Blood	198	36%
Scott Pilgrim Vs The World	197	77%
The Secret Of Monkey Island SE	195	92%
Sega Rally Online Arcade	208	74%
Sega Mega Drive Ultimate Collection	177	85%
Section 8: Prejudice	209	80%
SBK 2011	206	70%
SBK Generations	220	54%
SBK X: Superbike World Championship	193	67%
Sega Rally	158	92%
Sengoku Basara: Samurai Heroes	198	76%
Shadows Of The Damned	207	79%
Shank	197	86%
Shatter	183	91%
Shaun White Skateboarding	198	70%
Shaun White Snowboarding	173	72%
Shellshock 2: Blood Trails	177	32%
Shift 2: Unleashed	204	66%
The Shoot	199	76%
Shoot Many Robots	217	81%
Silent Hill: Downpour	217	81%
Silent Hill HD Collection	217	76%
Silent Hill: Homecoming	174	64%
The Simpsons Arcade Game	216	54%
The Simpsons Game	160	82%
The Sims 3	199	87%
The Sims 3: Pets	212	70%
SingStar	159	80%
Singularity	195	80%
Siren Blood Curse	170	62%
Skate	159	86%
Skate 2	175	82%
Skate 3	192	86%
Skullgirls	218	88%
Sleeping Dogs	222	80%
The Sly Collection	200	84%
Sly Cooper: Thieves In Time	230	60%

GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
Sniper Elite V2	218	52%
Sniper: Ghost Warrior	206	45%
Sniper: Ghost Warrior 2	230	55%
SOCOM: Special Forces	205	63%
Soldner-X-2: Final Prototypes	195	70%
Sonic Adventure	198	63%
Sonic Adventure 2	225	69%
Sonic CD	214	82%
Sonic The Hedgehog 4: Episode 1	199	82%
Sonic The Hedgehog 4: Episode 2	225	40%
Sonic & Sega All-Stars Racing	190	78%
Sonic & All-Stars Racing Transformed	227	88%
Sonic Generations	212	70%
Sonic The Hedgehog	151	52%
Sonic Unleashed	175	48%
Sorcery	219	76%
SoulCalibur IV	169	94%
SoulCalibur V	214	80%
South Park: The Stick of Truth	242	81%
Spec Ops: The Line	220	59%
Spider-Man 3	155	33%
Spider-Man: Edge Of Time	212	38%
Spider-Man: Shattered Dimensions	197	69%
Spider-Man: Web Of Shadows	173	55%
Spin Jam	174	32%
Splatterhouse	200	58%
Splinter Cell Double Agent	153	79%
Split/Second: Velocity	192	90%
Sports Champions	196	83%
Sports Champions 2	225	65%
SSX	216	45%
Stacking	203	88%
Starhawk	219	81%
Star Ocean: The Last Hope International	190	63%
Star Trek	231	52%
Star Trek: D-A-C	189	57%
Star Wars: The Force Unleashed	171	65%
Star Wars: The Force Unleashed II	199	61%
Star Wars: Pinball	230	79%
Start The Party!	196	72%
Stormrise	178	51%
Stranglehold	159	65%
Street Fighter III: 3rd Strike Online Edition	209	92%
Street Fighter IV	176	95%
Street Fighter X Tekken	217	83%
Strength Of The Sword 3	234	81%
Strider	242	62%
Super Puzzle Fighter II HD Turbo Remix	168	78%
Super Rub-A-Dub	151	83%
Super Street Fighter IV: Arcade Edition	207	88%
Stuntman: Ignition	157	82%
Super Stardust HD	155	74%
Superstars V8: Next Challenge	190	55%
Superstars V8 Racing	181	63%
Super Street Fighter II Turbo HD Remix	176	72%
Super Street Fighter IV	191	90%
Supremacy MMA	211	40%
Switchball	191	75%
Swords And Soldiers	199	88%
Syndicate	216	78%
Tales Of Graces f	222	77%
Tales Of Monkey Island	196	91%
Tales Of Xillia	234	70%
Tank Battles	186	68%
Tekken 5: Dark Resurrection Online	161	87%
Tekken 6	184	94%
Tekken Tag Tournament 2	223	90%
Test Drive Ferrari Racing Legends	221	60%
Tetris	202	84%
Test Drive Unlimited 2	203	62%
The Amazing Spider-Man	221	61%
The Last Of Us	233	94%
 <p>When <i>The Last Of Us</i> is good (winter), it's better than anything else this gen – we do not say that lightly.</p>		
The Last Of Us: Left Behind	242	81%
The Testament Of Sherlock Holmes	224	55%
The Walking Dead	231	92%
 <p>The <i>Walking Dead</i> should be required playing for anyone who considers themselves a fan of our favourite medium.</p>		
The Walking Dead: Survival Instinct	231	20%
Thor: God Of Thunder	206	38%
Tiger Woods PGA Tour 14	231	61%
Time Crisis 4	166	69%
Time Crisis: Razing Storm	199	58%
TimeShift	162	72%

GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
TMNT: Turtles In Time-Re-shelled	186	57%
TNA Impact!	171	71%
Tokyo Jungle	223	81%
Tom Clancy's EndWar	173	80%
Tom Clancy's HAWX	177	75%
Tom Clancy's HAWX 2	196	69%
Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell Blacklist	235	71%
Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell Trilogy HD	210	78%
Tomb Raider	229	90%
Tomb Raider Trilogy	204	86%
Tomb Raider: Underworld	173	83%
Tony Hawk's Project 8	151	85%
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater HD	223	73%
Tony Hawk's Proving Ground	160	72%
Tony Hawk: Ride	188	52%
Top Darts	202	71%
Top Gun	198	53%
Top Gun: Hard Lock	218	45%
Top Spin 3	168	71%
Top Spin 4	203	60%
Topotai: Spinning Through Worlds	183	61%
Toy Story 3	195	82%
Transformers: Dark Of The Moon	208	64%
Transformers: Fall Of Cybertron	223	73%
Transformers: War For Cybertron	194	80%
Trash Panic	181	79%
Trials Of Topaq	159	50%
Trine	184	85%
Trinity: Souls Of Zill O'll	202	56%
Trinity Universe	194	61%
Tron Evolution	200	17%
Turnbale	198	70%
Turning Point: Fall Of Liberty	165	40%
Turok	163	46%
TV Superstars	199	53%
Twisted Metal	216	68%
Two Worlds II	203	64%
UFC Undisputed 2009	180	90%
UFC Undisputed 2010	193	88%
UFC Undisputed 3	215	82%
Ultimate Marvel Vs Capcom 3	212	78%
Uncharted: Drake's Fortune	161	87%
Uncharted 2: Among Thieves	185	96%
Uncharted 3: Drake's Deception	212	90%
Under Siege	207	71%
Unearthed: Trail Of Ibn Battuta: Ep1	233	05%
The Unfinished Swan	225	78%
Unreal Tournament III	162	88%
Untold Legends: Dark Kingdom	151	54%
Valkyria Chronicles	173	82%
Vancouver 2010	189	76%
Vanquish	197	93%
Viking: Battle For Asgard	165	74%
Virtua Fighter 5	151	83%
Virtua Fighter 5: Final Showdown	220	90%
Virtua Tennis 3	150	91%
Virtua Tennis 4	205	79%
Wakeboarding HD	195	65%
The Walking Dead: All That Remains	240	89%
The Walking Dead: 400 Days	234	83%
Wanted: Weapons Of Fate	179	63%
Warhammer 40,000: Space Marine	210	51%
Warhawk	157	84%
Warriors: Legends Of Troy	202	14%
Warriors Orochi 3	217	59%
Watchmen: The End Is Nigh	183	55%
Way Of The Samurai 3	190	16%
Wet	184	41%
Wheelman	178	72%
Where The Wild Things Are	188	56%
White Knight Chronicles	190	55%
White Knight Chronicles II	207	49%
Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?	214	79%
WipEout HD	172	84%
Wizorb	222	78%
Wolfenstein	183	72%
Wonderbook: Book Of Spells	226	80%
Worms Collection	224	85%
Worms 2: Armageddon	198	87%
Worms Ultimate Mayhem	217	80%
WRC: FIA World Rally Championship	197	76%
WRC 2: FIA World Rally Championship	211	63%
WRC 3 FIA World Rally Championship	225	75%
WSC Real 11	204	69%
WWE All Stars	204	82%
WWE Legends Of WrestleMania	178	80%
WWE SmackDown Vs Raw 2011	199	63%

GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
WWE 12	212	50%
WWE 13	225	55%
X-Blades	178	54%
XCOM: Enemy Unknown	224	94%
 <p>Thinking, planning, failing and dying is back in fashion: <i>XCOM</i> is a phenomenal reimagining of a classic title and an instant classic in its own right.</p>		
X-Men Arcade	203	60%
X-Men Destiny	211	35%
X-Men Origins: Wolverine	179	71%
Yaiba: Ninja Gaiden Z	242	35%
Yakuza: Dead Souls	216	60%
Yakuza 3	191	80%
Yakuza 4	203	79%
Yar's Rev	206	57%
Zen Pinball 2	224	90%
Zombie Apocalypse: Never Die Alone	213	69%
Zone Of The Enders HD Collection	226	81%
Zuma	182	78%

PS VITA LISTING



GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
A-Men	217	70%
Army Corps Of Hell	217	64%
Assassin's Creed III: Liberation	225	76%
Atelier Meruru: The Apprentice Of Arland	221	35%
Everybody's Golf	215	86%
BlazBlue: Continuum Shift Extend	216	85%
Call Of Duty: Black Ops Declassified	227	18%
Dead Nation	201	86%
Destiny Of Spirits	244	76%
Dokuro	230	71%
Earth Defense Force 2017 Portable	230	82%
Escape Plan	216	81%
FIFA Football	216	80%
fiOw	151	90%
Flower	176	85%
Gravity Crash	187	85%
Gravity Rush	219	86%
Hotline Miami	233	85%
Hustle Kings	216	81%
Joe Danger	194	96%
Killzone: Mercenary	236	88%
LittleBigPlanet	223	93%
Little Deviants	215	69%
Lumines Electric Symphony	216	85%
MGS HD Collection	221	70%
ModNation Racers: Road Trip	215	59%
Mortal Kombat	219	83%
MotorStorm RC	217	81%
Muramasa Rebirth	234	80%
New Little King's Story	224	70%
Ninja Gaiden Sigma Plus	217	72%
Ninja Gaiden Sigma 2 Plus	230	60%
Oddworld: Stranger's Wrath HD	214	86%
Orgarhythm	230	55%
PlayStation All-Stars Battle Royale	225	80%
Persona 4 Golden	228	94%
PixelJunk Monsters	163	94%
Puddle	222	82%
Rayman Origins	216	84%
Reality Fighters	215	52%
Resistance: Burning Skies	219	54%
Ridge Racer	216	48%
Rocketbirds: Hardboiled Chicken	212	82%
Silent Hill: Book Of Memories	225	32%
Sorcery Saga: Curse of the Great Curry God	240	70%
Soul Sacrifice	232	85%
Sound Shapes	223	88%
Superfrog HD	234	41%
Super Monkey Ball: Banana Splitz	224	78%
Sumoni: Demon Arts	230	46%
Super Stardust Delta	216	84%
Tearaway	239	80%
Terraria	232	85%
Touch My Katamari	216	83%
Toukiden: The Age Of Demons	241	86%
Ultimate Marvel vs Capcom 3	216	80%
Uncharted: Fight For Fortune	227	83%
Uncharted: Golden Abyss	215	83%
Unit 13	216	67%
Velocity Ultra	233	80%
Virtua Tennis 4: World Tour Edition	215	81%
Virtue's Last Reward	227	84%
WipEout 2048	215	87%

*denotes import review

PLAYING THE PLAYLIST

Watch out! Games!



WHAT
(have they been playing?)

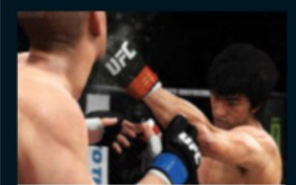
Destiny

WHY (was it chosen?)
It's even better than I expected

LUKE ALBIGÉS

DESPITE HAVING

NEVER been a massive fan of Bungie's *Halo* games, I've been all over *Destiny* since it was first revealed. It's the concept, I suppose – the game is basically a fusion of many different elements that each appeal to my addictive personality on different levels. I played the alpha solidly from the moment it went live to the point where Bungie finally pulled the plug, and now I'm all over the beta and September can't come soon enough. With additional exclusive content on PlayStation platforms, an entire galaxy to explore and all that sweet, sweet loot to round up, I get the feeling that this is going to keep me busy for months. It doesn't bother me at all that so many games are slipping to 2015 – I'll be on *Destiny* until then anyway.



WHAT
(have they been playing?)

EA Sports UFC

WHY (was it chosen?)
Because I like punching people

SAM SMITH

I ENJOY ANY sport that involves someone punching someone else, and I've always loved EA's *Fight Night* boxing games. Made by the same developer, EA's take on UFC feels authentic and looks amazing, and playing it against an opponent of a similar skill level is a blast. It just feels like a UFC game should, and is great fun.

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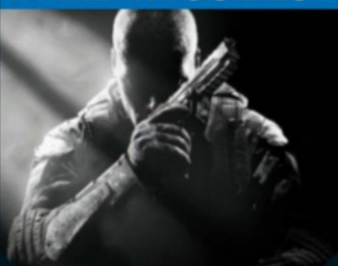
FIRST REVIEWS



BREAKING NEWS



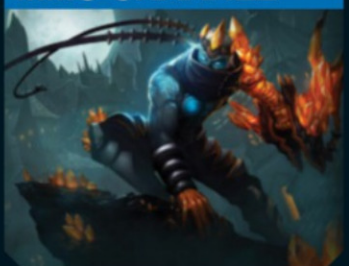
IN-DEPTH GUIDES



BIG INTERVIEWS



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Dark Souls look like a kids' game

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